NOVA SCOTIA
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
VICTIMS' SERVICES DIVISION

A Review of the Effectiveness and Viability of Domestic Violence Interventions as an Adjunct to the Formal Criminal Justice System

For information contact:
Victims' Services Division
PO Box 7
5151 Terminal Road, 4th Floor
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 2L6

Telephone: (902) 424-8785
Fax: (902) 424-2056
Email: vicserv@gov.ns.ca

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Executive Summary

This paper reviews the effectiveness and viability of traditional and emerging support services for female victims and male perpetrators of spousal/intimate partner violence. The importance of examining services that coincide with the formal criminal justice pro-arrest, pro-charge, pro-prosecution intervention is emphasized. The inability of the individualized response of the criminal justice system to address the structural roots of the problem is recognized, as well as the critique reflected in the literature that it has failed to present women with satisfactory choices, ensure women's safety, and transform offenders. Further, it may be counterproductive to consider that a formal criminal justice response can address the broad range of severity of violence between men and women in intimate relationships.

A review of the traditional shelter and men's intervention services reveals limited empirical evidence of program effectiveness. Relatively little is known about the shelter experience, the bulk of the research having been conducted to raise awareness of the severity of abuse against women, while providing little information about whether and how programs are effective.

The assumption of the women's movement and the criminal justice system that the goal of women who have experienced violence in their relationship is to live independently from their partner sometimes differs from women's self-defined goal. As many women return to their partners who have been violent, the success of shelters as an intervention measured against the goal of independent living may be assessed as limited. Their existence however, as short term safe housing for women in crisis, particularly in cases of severe violence is considered imperative.

A large majority of men's intervention programs in Canada have never been systematically evaluated, and few of the evaluations that do exist have used methodologies appropriate for assessing effectiveness. There is evidence of cautious optimism in relation to reduction of abuse, increased willingness of men to take responsibility for the abuse, and increased feelings of victim safety. The most recent studies however, conclude it is simply too soon to know with certainty whether men's intervention programs are effective and whether one model is more effective than another.

The literature reveals a call for interventions that recognize, and are appropriate for, a continuum of violence severity. Such an approach recognizes there are a variety of familial contexts in which violence occurs. Statistics reveal that shelters provide services to a small percentage of women who are victims of spousal/intimate partner violence. A call is made for research on female victimization in other than shelter-seeking samples, with the suggestion that studying only the most extreme subgroup of abused women may not be truly representative, or even the most common group of women requiring support services. Similarly, the same intervention program may not be appropriate for all men. A "one-size fits all" approach fails to recognize the diversity of men who enter programs. Assessments are necessary of the likelihood that individuals will complete and/or benefit from a particular program.

The processes involved for women in making a decision to leave a partner who has been violent often

mean women return to the relationship. It must be recognized also, that many women and men wish to make satisfying changes to make the relationship work. Comprehensive programming recognizes that separation is no longer seen as the only real answer to spousal/intimate partner violence. Increasingly the question in relation to interventions involving the couple is not whether, but under what conditions they are appropriate. Increasingly also are calls for interventions to respond to children who have been exposed to violence in their home. The magnitude of work to be done in this under-researched area is acknowledged.

Assessing risk of both reoffending and lethality/dangerousness becomes imperative. Though risk assessment is in its infancy, early evidence suggests there are tools that may be useful in gaining information in assisting women to develop safety planning, and in encouraging coordination among multiple service providers.

Coordination of criminal justice, social service, mental health, and community interventions is perceived to be the guiding principle shaping policy for the foreseeable future. Most of the limited research available to date has focussed on individual components of a coordinated intervention rather than the entire community response. The need is recognized for harmonization of policy initiatives.

Continued cautious examination of the appropriateness of restorative justice forums to respond to spousal/intimate partner violence is expected. While theoretically the potential of restorative justice is acknowledged, current operational concerns include issues such as informed choice for victims, power dynamics and imbalance, and the potential to compromise the significant gains made in having the issue of spousal/intimate partner violence taken seriously by the criminal justice system.

It is concluded from the material surveyed, that increased methodological rigour is required in several areas to support the development of sound policy and innovative practice:

- on female victimization in other than shelter-seeking samples;

- to determine essential elements of effectiveness of men's intervention:
  - → matching interventions to diverse offender characteristics,
  - → the impact of entrance status on recidivism,
  - → ways to monitor compliance and minimize attrition,
  - → ways to assess the safety of female partners when men attend programs.

- system-wide evaluations to understand the impact of different components of a coordinated community response on other parts of the system, and the effectiveness of the overall response;

- systematic evaluations of intervention strategies or models to respond to children who have been exposed to violence in the home;

- continued cautious examination of conditions under which restorative justice forums may be considered to be appropriate mechanisms.

1.0 Introduction

In April, 2000 the Victims' Services Division committed to undertaking a review of the research on the effectiveness and viability of family violence intervention programs as an adjunct to the formal justice system in responding to spousal/partner violence.

In 1995 the Government of Nova Scotia established the Framework for Action Against Family Violence (Framework for Action) as a comprehensive strategy to improve the response of the justice system to incidents of spousal/partner violence. Analysis of the Framework for Action revealed that the policy had a notable impact on the response of the justice system, in a significantly higher charge and conviction rate, a greater tendency of police and other justice officials to refer victims to support services, and a decline in elapsed time from first court appearance to final outcome (*Framework for Action Against Family Violence*, April, 1999, p. iii). At the time of this writing the Minister of Justice has authorized an independent review of the Framework for Action to determine possible areas for improvement.

The adoption of the pro-arrest, pro-charge, pro-prosecution policy in Canada has mirrored the move in other jurisdictions from viewing domestic violence as merely a 'domestic' problem to recognizing it as a criminal offence (Dobash & Dobash, 1992).

Though research findings support the efficacy of criminal justice interventions (Dobash & Dobash, 1992), there is recognition that "the criminal justice system, although providing symbolic equity, expression of moral reprehensiveness, and potential immediate protection, fails to provide women and the community with an ultimate or comprehensive strategy to eradicate violence" (Martin, 1999, p. 415)[1]. A review of the literature surrounding the debate about the etiology, and resultant intervention strategies to respond to spousal/partner violence reveals that as no single paradigm has provided an adequate explanation of male violence against women (Goldner, cited in Crump, 2000) no one approach can provide a proven response to end domestic violence for all women. A formal criminal justice response can at best provide one component of a necessary comprehensive community strategy. It is imperative then, to continue to examine the effectiveness of adjunctive interventions[2].

[1] See Presser and Gaarder (2000) for an overview of the legal approach to battering over the past three decades, which reflects shifts in feminist activism and scholarship, and changing theoretical discourses about battering. (See also O'Neill, 1998). A postmodern view of justice, which developed during the early 1980s, "calls into question the ideology of absolute justice" (p. 178). Victims are demanding more choice and control, and do not necessarily believe the criminal justice system can provide an adequate solution. By the current decade feminist scholarship has identified "the need for policies that empower victims and remove the criminal justice system from center stage" (Smart, cited in Presser and Gaarder, p. 179). It is within this context that new extralegal interventions are sought.

[2] See Moyer (2000) for a review of alternatives to formal processing, including a comprehensive list of associated discussion issues.

Despite the past twenty-five years of activism, and an ever expanding body of literature, there exists relatively few empirical studies to substantiate the efficacy of existing interventions. Interventions have traditionally focused on emergency shelters, individual and group counselling, and individual advocacy for women, and mandatory arrest and court-ordered or voluntary group programs for men. Conjoint interventions involving both partners, though facing considerable controversy, are increasingly being recognized as appropriate under specified conditions.

This review has been able to take advantage of earlier analyses of these traditional services (Crump, 2000) to examine the effectiveness of interventions for both the female victims and male perpetrators of spousal/partner violence. Available literature of the past decade that has evaluated women's shelters, outreach and advocacy services, men's intervention programs, and conjoint programming was reviewed to determine the latest trends and current knowledge base in relation to each program modality. Results lead to a recognition of the necessity of programming initiatives for a continuum of violence severity.

Increasing calls for the "coordination of criminal justice and social service interventions [perceived by many to be] the guiding principle shaping policy for the year 2000 and beyond" (Buzawa & Buzawa, 1996, p. 243) are reflected in this review, as well as calls for research and programming that recognizes a continuum of violence severity. An analysis is included of the present understanding of the capability of risk assessment instruments to predict re-offending and lethality/dangerousness, and to be used as safety planning tools.

Available material that has evaluated restorative justice approaches in cases of spousal/intimate partner violence has been reviewed. Finally, the under-researched area of interventions for children exposed to domestic violence is highlighted.

This report thus includes services currently available to which the criminal justice system can refer victims, offenders, and children, and examines the currently recognized principles shaping future policy direction.

2.0 Traditional Interventions

2.1 Women's Shelters, Outreach and Advocacy Services

A review of the literature reveals little evidence of the existence of empirical study on the efficacy of shelter programming for abused women (Wharton, 1998). In addition, only one of the studies examined (Sullivan, 1991) employed a control group, permitting conclusions to be drawn that improvements resulted from the intervention alone. The paucity of material is substantiated by Tutty, Weaver, & Rothery (1999), who confirm that despite the prevalence of shelters across North America as "the primary resource to protect assaulted women from violent partners" (p. 899), developed from the growth of the women's movement in the 1970s (Tutty, 1993), few have been evaluated (Tutty, Weaver, & Rothery, 1999). In reviewing the published material on assaulted women's experiences

in transition houses, Tutty et al. determined that while abused women, in surveys "have rated shelters as among the most effective help sources, especially as compared to traditional service agencies" (p. 899), relatively little is known about the shelter experience from the residents' perspective, and about what happens to women when they leave. The bulk of the research, conducted to raise awareness of the severity of abuse against women, though essential, has "provided little information about whether and how shelter programs were effective" (p. 900). Additionally, it is stated that "factors such as severity of abuse or a woman's intent to remain in the relationship are not taken into account in feminist treatment recommendations" (McMahon & Pence, cited in Schlee, Heyman, & O'Leary, 1998, p. 4).

The Violence Against Women Survey (VAWS), a random sample of telephone interviews with 12,300 English and French speaking women 18 years of age and older, determined in 1993 that 13% of women who left a violent partner stayed in a transition home or shelter (Statistics Canada, 1998). The same Statistics Canada report indicated the number of shelters in Canada has increased steadily since the 1970s, with reported numbers increasing from 371 in 1992-93 to 550 in 1998. In 1995, younger women under the age of 35 represented two-thirds of the total number of women admitted to shelters in Canada. In addition to providing safe shelter to women, transition houses provide a variety of non-residential outreach services. On May 31, 1995, a Statistics Canada snapshot revealed that 365 shelters reported that on a typical day they received 3,000 requests for services from non-residents. A snapshot on April 17, 2000 revealed a figure of 4,921 requests from non-residents and ex-residents being reported from 438 shelters (Statistics Canada, 2000).

Tutty et al. (1999) raise the question of why so few women stay in shelters. Some speculate (Weisz, Taggert, Mockler, & Streich, cited in Tutty et al., 1999) that many women have the financial means to access better alternatives, and shelters are thus serving those women who need them most. The concern is elsewhere expressed that shelters are turning away almost as many women as they are able to shelter each year (Tutty, 1993).

According to the VAWS the severity of the violence is a contributing factor in determining whether women choose to enter a shelter. The survey revealed 19% of women overall had at some point been injured severely enough to seek medical attention; for women who stayed in shelters the figure was 63%. Women who stay in shelters are also more likely to turn to the police for assistance or protection (Statistics Canada, 1999).

Gondolf (1998a) suggests many women are not able to access shelter services because of "lack of transportation or child care, or the obstacles of chaotic and disruptive lives" (p. 132). He maintains there is a particular need for developing outreach services because the majority of women never receive support. Gondolf writes of an extensive study that attempted to contact 1,895 women in civil and criminal courts. Success was achieved in offering an outreach program of shelter-based support groups or phone counselling to only one-fifth of that amount. Only 4% of the total eligible women actually participated in the service offered. The study concludes the outreach effort was "minimally successful in contacting and recruiting women, and the eligible women who did accept services did not extensively participate in them" (p. 140). The demographic profile of those women who did

participate in the service (primarily white, educated, and employed, who had used other counselling or social services in the past) differed substantially from "the typical women with court contact who are much more disadvantaged in terms of education and employment, and disproportionately African American" (p. 141). The study suggests the inquiry may be pointing to different types of women who have been abused: women who are simply difficult to reach, women who do not perceive a need for services, women who do not perceive counselling as their greatest need, and finally, a small group of women who are interested in additional needs related to emotional impact, legal complications, and the impact of the abuse on their children. Suggestions are made for modifications to provide for a more attractive and accessible service: direct recruitment in the courts, enhanced phone contact, condensing information into one brief session, and an intermediate format between phone counselling and shelter-based counselling such as a drop-in centre.

It is noted that for women who enter shelters, the experience does not necessarily mark the end of their relationship with the partner who abused them (Tutty, 1996). Tutty (1996) cites studies conducted from 1981 to 1989 that report from 49% to 58% of women returning to their partners after staying in a shelter. Giles-Sims (cited in Tutty et al., 1999) suggests that, on average, women who have been abused leave their partners four to five times before a separation becomes permanent. This dynamic is cited as a process inherent in maintaining the separation rather than "failure of the shelter staff or inconsistency on the part of the battered woman" (Tutty, 1996, p. 426).

Tutty et al. (1999), in a study examining the extent to which services, programs, and referrals in the YWCA Sherriff King Home in Calgary provide the support and resources viewed as necessary by residents, interviewed 63 women in the shelter; 35 women were located for a follow-up interview 4-6 months later. The study, using a combination of qualitative and quantitative methodologies, conducted interviews over a 1½ year period. Results indicated generally positive comments about the shelter in relation to emotional support from shelter staff, perceived feelings of safety, informal social support, information and referrals, the child support program, and the availability of a setting where their concrete needs could be met for a three week period while they were addressing other more pressing issues. Negative comments were received in relation to access to staff, with the perception that staff were too busy, confusion associated with having many different counsellors with changing shifts, and difficulties with communal living. Of the 35 women interviewed 4-6 months later, 31 were living independently of their assaultive partner, three had returned to the relationship, and one woman was again in a shelter, having been abused by the partner to whom she had returned. The study concludes that the majority of comments from residents supported "the importance of the facility as not only a refuge but also a turning point for many women to take the first steps in a transition to a life free of abuse" (p. 922). A limitation of this study is that the small sample size limits generalizability, a weakness Tutty et al. identify in relation to some of the small sample evaluations they assessed.

Wharton (1989) in an attempt to understand why so many women leave shelters to return to violent homes, examined the perspectives of shelter residents and staff. She claims an adequate response to this question requires an understanding of the institutional processes within shelters themselves, as well as an understanding of the psychological characteristics of women who have been abused and

the lack of resources available to them (Sullivan, 1991).

Based on ten months of participant observation as a volunteer in one shelter, Wharton (1989) determined that "the staff's ideology was at variance with residents' expectations of what the shelter would provide" (Abstract). While staff held a long term vision of developing a world free of violence, the goal of the residents was short term and concrete. Residents, usually concerned with stopping their partner's violence, and returning home quickly, thus viewed the shelter as a haven in a time of temporary crisis rather than a home or the springboard to a new life. Wharton claims staff perspectives shaped the shelter environment in ways that diverged from residents' expectations, creating three areas of conflict: (1) the feminist message of empowerment, interpreted as encouragement to separate from their partner was in conflict with many women's perception of themselves and their goal[3]; (2) the staff emphasis on anger as the dominant and optimal emotion of residents resulted in other emotions being ignored or explained away; (3) staff perception of male partners as violent assailants denied other components of the relationship that were valued by residents (pp. 53-59). Living under staff-imposed rules and stressors associated with communal living created other areas of conflict. Wharton concludes "[t]o achieve independence and separation from their violent home situation, the residents had to adjust to radically new routines that were short-term and intrinsically unappealing, and did little to prepare them for the sorts of changes the staff hoped would emerge from a period of refuge in the shelter" (p. 67).

The assumption that the goal of women who enter shelters is to live independently from their male partners, which Davies (1998) suggests in a review of the history of service-defined advocacy, has resulted from an over-generalization of the "battered woman", is reflected in three studies in the literature examined. (Tutty 1993; Tutty, 1996; Wuest & Merritt-Gray, 1999).

Tutty (1993) examined the experience of 18 women within a year of leaving a shelter in northern Alberta. The study concludes that the needs of women after leaving the shelter focused on dealing with their ex-partners, their children, and their own feelings of low self-esteem, and advocates for funding for a continuum of services necessary to adequately support women to live independent lives after leaving the shelter.

Tutty (1996) evaluated two follow-up programs designed to provide support and advocacy for women who chose to live independently from their partners. Follow-up services involved one-to-two hour visits per week by a bachelor-level social worker in a counselling and advocacy role, in a service lasting from three to six months after the woman leaves the shelter. The study, involving 60 women, reported statistically significant improvements in appraisal support (the availability of someone to talk to about one's problems), and statistically significant improvements in self-esteem for a subset of 12 women. The study found no significant improvement in belonging support (obtaining support from friends and family) and perceived stress levels. The study concludes that further research is necessary,

[3] Nicholl (1998) notes the prevailing view of both the women's movement and the criminal justice system is 'you do not go back'; "The 'cycle of violence' is defined in a way that makes it shameful for victims to admit they want to stay in the relationship and take another try at making the partnership work" (p. 9).

and cautions that interpretation of the findings is limited due to the relatively small sample size and the absence of a control group.

Wuest and Merritt-Gray (1999), in a feminist grounded theory study[4] involving interviews with 15 women more than one year after leaving their relationship, determined "*reclaiming self* to be the central social psychological process for a woman leaving and not returning to an abusive conjugal relationship" (p. 110). Stages in the process of reclaiming self are identified as: counteracting abuse, breaking free, not going back, and moving on. Wuest and Merritt-Gray note most of the current research on women abused in intimate relationships has focused on the process of surviving in the relationship, preparing to leave, and managing the initial crisis of leaving. Focusing on conditions necessary to support the stage of not going back, the authors identify two subprocesses: claiming and maintaining territory, "the process of establishing and maintaining a safe place of one's own involv[ing] two strategic processes of gaining control and getting situated" (p. 118) and relentless justifying, "the tortuous process of continually explaining one's situation not only to the outside world, but also to one's self" (p. 126). To maintain the separation over time, the research findings support the need for follow-up staff "to remove barriers that impede the process of not going back" (p. 130).

The literature reviewed thus far in relation to shelter, outreach and advocacy services reveals the assumption that the optimal goal, and one with which women were presumed to concur, was for independent living apart from the partner who had abused them. Success of the intervention as measured against that outcome is seen to be limited. The premise of the "woman-defined advocacy"model (Davies, 1998) differs in its understanding that not all women want to leave their partner. The model was developed following implementation of Connecticut's Family Violence Prevention and Response Act, which legislated provision of "mandatory arrest with probable cause, arraignment on the next court day following arrest, the clearly specified option of protective orders, a pre-trial offender education program for first-time misdemeanor arrestees, and the creation of a new position: the *family violence victim advocate* (FVVA)" (p. 177). A study of the implementation of the law drew attention to a concern about advocacy. As well as a divergence of opinion among advocates about what women "really" needed, the most pressing concern expressed by advocates related to the lack of time they had available to spend with the women. In relation to the former concern, interviews determined that

> [c]lose to half of the FVVAs commented that the women wanted the abuse to end, but did not want to end the relationship. In contrast, about half of the advocates said that what the women "really needed" was independence, self-esteem, and programs to help make independence a reality (p. 178).

In relation to the latter concern, it became evident, with an increasing volume of cases proceeding through the courts, that a "service-defined advocacy" had evolved as the predominant model. In

[4] In feminist grounded theory the research design is described as emergent, with themes and concepts analyzed in initial data guiding future data collection (Wuest & Merritt-Gray, p. 114).

response to decreasing time to spend with the women, the efforts of advocates were focused on fitting women into the most accessible services. In effect, "the services c[a]me to define the intervention strategies" (p. 179). It was out of this study that the "woman-defined advocacy" model evolved, with its focus on four steps: "understanding the woman's perspective, assessing risk, building on the women's plan, and reviewing and implementing the plan" (p. 181). The model was expanded to shelter advocates outside the legal system, and has subsequently spread across the state in response to training and expanded resources available.

The "woman-defined advocacy" model broadens the approach to advocacy, and is based on the conclusion that "[s]eparation will no longer be seen as the only real answer to domestic violence" (p. 165). Women, in partnership with the advocate, assess their *batterer generated* and *life generated risks*, and develop a *safety plan* based on their own choice of whether or not to leave the relationship. The foundation of the model is acceptance of the reality that "many battered women do not see physical violence as their primary risk or leaving as their most viable option" (p. 5). The model thus demands that advocates reassess their frustration with women whom they perceive are accepting responsibility for the abuse, are in "denial", or who wish to stay with the partner who has abused them. Yet, rather than advocating simply a passive acceptance of a woman's choices or analysis, the model promotes an ongoing risk analysis, an exploration of the alternatives available and the corresponding consequences of each one. The model had been adopted and refined over a five year period at the time of publication and has yet to be subjected to empirical study. As a result, no analysis of outcome is available.

While the success of shelters as an intervention measured against the goal of independent living may be assessed as limited based on the percentage of women returning to their partners after leaving transition houses, the provision of short term safe housing for women in crisis situations is considered imperative as part of the continuum of services available to victims of spousal/partner violence.

2.2 Men's Intervention Programs

Intervention programs for men who assault their partners were initiated during the late 1970s[5] (Myers, 1996; Davis & Taylor, 1999), initially as educational groups promoting anti-sexist beliefs, and subsequently incorporating cognitive/behavioural therapeutic techniques. Group treatment became a popular sanction of the courts in the wake of pro-arrest legislation of the 1980s in the United States. Intervention programs for men may be required as part of a pre-trial diversion program (Johnson & Kanzler, 1993), imposed as part of a sentence (Metro Woman Abuse Council, 1997), or as a condition of probation[6].

[5] Health Canada reported a total of 112 new programs were developed in Canada between 1979 and 1993. See Myers, 1996, p. 7.

[6] Serious concern has been expressed within the province of Nova Scotia regarding the lack of access to men's intervention programs on a province-wide basis, and in relation to the lengthy waiting lists of existing

Despite the fact that the safety of female partners has received little attention in the research (Lundy, Davies, Holmes, & Urquhart, 1996) there is evidence to suggest that women generally feel safer when their partners are participating in a program (Meredith & Burns, cited in Lundy et al., 1996).

Groups for men often employ a mixture of theoretical approaches although most are based on a feminist model (McDonald & Foster, n.d.; Whitman, Law, & Austen, n.d.; McKendy, 1992) developed by the Domestic Abuse Intervention Project in Duluth, Minnesota (Davis & Taylor, 1999), which asserts that male violence is part of a spectrum of efforts to control women. Program length may vary from as little as one day to 32 weeks (Feazel et al., cited in Davis & Taylor, 1999), but is most often of approximately 16 weeks duration (McDonald & Foster, n.d.; Gabor, 1993; Dutton, 1998). Some programs are open-ended and unstructured with new members joining established groups with experienced members (Hanson & Whitman, 1995).

Conflict exists about the future direction of men's intervention programs, evidenced in the debate over the establishment of standards to create guidelines for program content and length[7] (Davis & Taylor, 1999; Goldner, 1999). While some maintain the criticism that domestic violence victims and their advocates have raised regarding the potential harm intervention programs might cause[8] may effectively be addressed through the development of standards (Austin & Dankwort, 1999), others suggest the "one-size fits all" approach that standards entail fails to recognize the diversity of men who enter the programs (Healey et al., cited in Davis & Taylor, 1999). Still others (Hanson & Wallace-Capretta, 2000a) maintain that standards have developed in the absence of strong research evidence, indicating there is "only weak evidence supporting the efficacy of any form of batterer treatment, and even less evidence that one treatment approach is superior to another" (p. 2). Evidence of the debate is seen in research content and in theoretical discussion. For example, one study found that entrance status, i.e., whether an individual entered voluntarily or was court-ordered, had no apparent impact on recidivism (DeMaris & Jackson, 1987), even though those who entered voluntarily showed a significantly greater average reduction in violent behaviour. Other theorists maintain intervention is completely ineffective with the subgroup of type 1 batterers[9] (Berns,

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programs. See *Framework for Action Against Family Violence*, (1999).

[7] As a result of concern expressed within Nova Scotia regarding the lack of standards and variation of programming, draft standards were developed in 1998 by the six men's intervention programs in consultation with the Department of Community Services.

[8] Lundy et al. (1996) suggest the safety of female partners is at risk when men drop out, or are expelled from the program. Similarly, Petrik, Gildersleeve-High, McEllistrem, & Subotnik (1994) speculate that non cooperation in evaluation follow-up may be attributed to female partners' fear of rating their partners due to continued abuse.

[9] Berns et al., in distinguishing between Type 1 (20%) and Type 2 (80%) batterers, note that Type 1 batterers, despite their severe physical and verbal aggression, actually calmed down physiologically when an argument began. Type 2 batterers showed the expected heart rate increase. See also Dutton (1998, pp. 6-11) and White & Gondolf (2000) for an analysis of batterer subtypes. In a study involving 100 men, White & Gondolf concluded "one size" appears to fit most, while a smaller proportion of men with psychiatric or mood disorders

Jacobson, & Gottman, 1999).

There is a wide divergence of opinion regarding program effectiveness. Intervention programs have rarely been subjected to rigorous scientific investigation (Palmer, Brown, & Barrera, 1992; Johnson & Kanzler, 1993; Myers, 1996; Berns et al., 1999; Davis & Taylor, 1999). Criticism has been made of the methodology of studies that have relied on objective measures to evaluate a reduction in levels of violence, claiming they fail to capture the severity or effects of abuse (Yllo & Bograd, cited in Lundy et al., 1996). Further methodological critiques relate to a lack of consensus on how to measure program effects (Davis & Taylor, 1999). Palmer et al. (1992) cite systematic problems with the use of self-report measures of recidivism, reliance on official police reports[10], comparison of personality tests before and after the program, comparisons of men from the same group on the basis of attendance, and comparison of court-mandated men with other convicted individuals. Further methodological problems are related to attrition[11] and poor attendance, short term or variations in follow-up of evaluations, and variation of intervention models (Palmer et al., 1992; Davis & Taylor, 1999). Davis and Taylor (1999) suggest that literature on men's intervention programs has gone through three generations of study. The earliest, and largest group of studies used a post-test only design. Though weakest methodologically, they provided the foundation upon which later, stronger designs were developed.

A review of the final reports of projects undertaken by the Corrections Directorate of the policy branch of the Ministry of the Solicitor General of Canada was conducted in 1996 (Myers, 1996), with a goal of assessing the knowledge gained with respect to correctional issues and the resulting policy implications. The question of effectiveness of men's intervention programs was pursued from two perspectives: individual attitudinal and behavioural changes, and a pro-feminist perspective assessing the impact on women and children of the values promoted. The underlying premise of the dual perspective was the recognition that although "the long term solution to ending violence against women must involve change at the level of social values, institutions and structures,...immediate intervention strategies [are] needed to deal with abusive behaviour at the individual level" (p. 10). The Corrections Directorate, in developing its research program in relation to men's intervention programs, was influenced by the literature on rehabilitation of other types of offenders. Myers cites research by Andrews et al. who found "the most effective treatment programs were those that addressed factors specifically associated with crime, such as attitudes supportive of crime and presence of criminal peer groups....[while] treatment programs that focused on general psychological factors such as self-esteem, loneliness and social skills deficits were largely ineffective" (p. 10).

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may require adjunctive psychiatric services or individual psychotherapy.

[10] Reliance on official police reports is thought to seriously underestimate actual violence committed (Rosenfeld, cited in Davis & Taylor, 1999).

[11] Davis and Taylor (1999) note that "program attrition typically runs greater than half of all participants assigned to treatment....a serious dilemma for researchers" (p. 87).

The results of two projects funded by the Corrections Directorate (Propensity Toward Abuse, and Correlates of Battering Among 997 Men, cited in Myers, 1996, pp. 16-17) support the belief that there are differences between abusive and non-abusive men. Severely abusive men were more likely to report violence during childhood, both as victims and as perpetrators, and "higher levels of juvenile delinquency, anti-social personality disorder, substance abuse, depression, marital maladjustment, jealousy and attitudes tolerant of violence towards female partners, as well as lower levels of self-esteem and self-control" (p. 17).

In relation to program attrition, a third funded research project found that men who were characterized as having an unstable lifestyle (frequent changes of address, low education, low income, unemployment) and who did not believe the intervention program addressed their particular problems were most likely to fail to complete the program. The single strongest predictor of completion was self-identification of the need for treatment. Based on these results Myers concludes the same intervention may not be appropriate for all men and some men are unlikely to complete any form of program. As it is important that men understand "the links between their behaviours and the goals of the treatment program" (p. 17), Myers questions the wisdom of the growing trend to make men's intervention programs part of the conditions of probation for all men who assault their partners without paying attention to an assessment of the likelihood that individuals will complete, or benefit from, a particular program.

Myers states that a large majority of men's intervention programs in Canada have never been systematically evaluated. She cites preliminary analysis of data from a multi-site evaluation study of five programs across Canada: Calgary (Pastoral Institute), Windsor (Hiatus House), Richmond Hill (Resolve), Montreal (Apres-Coup) and New Glasgow (New Leaf), that suggest "cautious optimism concerning the effectiveness of treatment programs" (p. 18).

Qualitative evaluations have been completed in relation to two programs: Apres-Coup in Montreal, and the Men's Crisis Service in Calgary. The Men's Crisis Service is operated by the Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter, and provides immediate, short term (usually two months) counselling to men whose spouses and children have used the shelter services[12]. Results of the evaluation revealed a significant impact on both men and women: many women reported a decrease in abuse and controlling behaviours, men reportedly increased their willingness to take responsibility for the abuse, and women frequently felt safer, as a result of changes brought about by the Men's Crisis Service, because of changes they had made in themselves through personal counselling, or as a result of other factors such as the decision to leave the relationship, legal sanctions, or other community resources. It is considered the Men's Crisis Service model "warrants serious consideration in the further development of male batterer programs" (p. 22).

The evaluation of the Apres-Coup men's intervention program in ville Lemoyne, Quebec, found that overall, program participants had an increased sense of self-awareness and recognition of the need to take responsibility for their actions, and that most participants had reduced the level of their violent

[12] See Myers (1999, pp. 20-22) for a description of the history and development of the program.

behaviour. The evaluation also discovered unintended negative consequences resulting from mixed messages received by the men about the nature of their violent behaviour and their need to take responsibility for it. The unintended consequences were associated with the lack of a concrete sense of what constitutes violence, the conceptualization of violence as a 'family' problem, suggesting women share equal responsibility for violent incidents, and work on self-awareness conducted in isolation from concerns for the safety of women and children. Strategies have been developed for ways to enhance the program, based on the evaluation results.

In the absence of a specific response to cultural differences among mainstream intervention programs, the Corrections Directorate funded one program for men of Indian and Pakistani origins (Assaultive Husbands Program), operated by the Multilingual Orientation Service Association for Immigrant Communities in Vancouver, and three Aboriginal intervention projects: the Waywayseecappo First Nation domestic abuse intervention program (to develop culturally sensitive domestic violence instruments), Waseskun House, the first community residential centre for male Aboriginal offenders in Quebec, and Community Holistic Circle Healing, a community healing process to address sexual abuse in the four communities of Hollow Water First Nation, Seymourville, Manigotogan, and Aghaming. Results were available for the Assaultive Husbands Program and Waseskun House.

The Assaultive Husbands Program was initiated upon determining that a significant number of Indo-Canadian men in Vancouver were being convicted of wife assault. It was believed that existing mainstream programs failed to effectively address their unique cultural and linguistic needs. While the program reported "some success in meeting its goals" (Myers, 1996, p. 25), Myers notes the absence of a follow-up to determine how long men remained nonviolent, and the absence of a consideration of psychological or other forms of abuse. Participants reported the importance of a shared cultural background in developing trust with the group leader. The program has not been formally evaluated.

In its final report of Phase One of the project, Waseskun House reported success in achieving its mandate of providing a holistic approach, addressing the mind, body, and spirit to assist First Nations men to regain balance in their lives. The majority of the 96 residents who stayed at Waseskun House are offenders who have been through the formal criminal justice system; others have been sent by their community to participate in a healing process. Phase One reported a 73% success rate for residents between June 1990 and November, 1993 (i.e., they did not recommit an offence). Phase Two of the project, "Re-entry of First Nations Ex-Offenders into the Family, Community, and Society Through a Community Service Mobilization Program, was expected to involve the formulation of a strategic plan to improve coordination between correctional services, Aboriginal organizations, Aboriginal justice committees, and Aboriginal communities, and the development of a comprehensive training program for community mobilization service workers.

Myers concludes her summary report by stating that "[e]valuation findings suggest that male batterer treatment programs have the potential to be delivered in a way that increases the safety of women and children, but that treatment approaches vary significantly....with respect to their objectives, content, modalities, and links to shelters and other agencies" (p. 33). In addition to the importance of

culturally appropriate community-based initiatives, it is suggested that "the effectiveness of treatment programs is increased by the extent to which they are linked with an integrated, comprehensive network of services responding to violence against women" (p. 33).

In a comprehensive and more current meta-analysis of the research literature on group intervention programs for men, Davis and Taylor (1999) note that while few of the several dozen evaluations that exist have used methodologies that are appropriate to addressing the issue of effectiveness, those with sound methodologies offer "fairly consistent evidence that treatment works and that the effect of treatment is substantial" (p. 69)[13]. Davis and Taylor however caution, as suggested above, that "the problem is not too few studies, but a paucity of sophisticated research" (p. 89); they suggest that firm conclusions should await the results of more methodologically rigorous studies.

In their examination Davis and Taylor found only eight studies that were considered to have "addressed in a rigorous fashion the issue of whether treatment works" (p. 77). Four studies (Dutton, 1986; Chen, Bersani, Myers, & Denton, 1989; Harrell, 1991; Dobash et al., 1996, cited in Davis & Taylor, 1999, p. 78), used a quasi-experimental (matched control group) design, and an additional four (Palmer et al., 1992; Feder, 1996; Davis & Taylor, 1997; Dunford, 1997) used random assignment of participants to the intervention. The former group of studies had sample sizes of more than 100 and follow-up periods of at least one year. The latter group of studies used methods designed to avoid selection bias evident in some studies (such as Dutton, 1986 or Harrell, 1991) that favour finding interventions effective "because the control group was comprised of batterers more prone to recidivate than those in the treated group" (Davis & Taylor, 1999, p. 80)[14].

While citing such evidence of success, Davis and Taylor echo others (Tolman & Bennett, cited in Gondolf, 1997; Hanson & Wallace-Capretta, 2000a) in noting there is little evidence that one form of intervention is more successful than others or that longer programs are more effective. They conclude finally, that although empirical evidence is highly limited, "there are bases for hypothesizing that some batterers may fare better in treatment (or fare better in certain types of treatment) than others" (p. 69). In other words, intervention programs may be more effective for some men than others.

Dutton (1998) claims psychological treatment to be "generally effective" (p. 176), citing a review of 302 meta-analytic studies that found only six that produced negative results. (Lipsey & Wilson, 1993, cited in Dutton, 1998, p. 176). Dutton further states that available data suggests "treatment works for most men, with some notable exceptions" (p. 179), among them being men who suffer from neurological problems from head trauma, with antisocial or borderline personality disorders, and those who are psychopathic.

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[13] Cunningham, Jaffe, Baker, Dick, Malla, Mazaheri, & Poisson (1998) note also that "the few studies with sufficiently rigorous methodologies have found that treated men show modest but statistically significant improvements in outcome over controls" (p. V).

[14] This latter group includes two with results not yet available.

Dutton cautions however against expectations of immediate improvement after one 16 week program[15]. Some recidivism is expected. Comparing abusive behaviour to other destructive addictions, and citing psychologist James O. Prochaska's spiral model of the stages of change (pp. 177-178), Dutton advises that program emphasis should be "on hastening the man's path towards cessation, rather than expecting 'instant' improvement" (p. 178), with relapse prevention" built into the program design. Dutton, Bodnarchuk, Kropp, Hart, and Ogloff (Dutton, p. 179) note statistically significant differences between completers and noncompleters when tracking men in their program for up to 11 years from first contact. Dutton admits however that the study was not a randomized design and so was unable to claim differences were due to the intervention or occurred as a result of motivational or psychological differences among the men. Further, no details were provided on how program effects were measured.

While Reitz (1999) advocates the use of anger management groups that currently dominate men's intervention programs, she notes they fail to answer the question of the origin of the tension. Other theorists have been openly critical of some intervention modalities, claiming reeducation approaches, relying on direct confrontation to overcome patterns of denial and minimalization are counterproductive and harmful to vulnerable clients (McKendy, 1992; Murphy & Baxter, 1997). Murphy and Baxter, citing several theorists (Dutton, & Starzomski, 1993, Goldstein & Rosenbaum, 1985; Hamberger & Hastings, 1991; Murphy, Meyer, & O"Leary, 1994; Smith, 1988), suggest that "[a]s a group, domestic perpetrators display self-concept problems that may present risk for therapeutic deterioration, including low self-esteem, high interpersonal dependency, unstable identities, borderline personality features, and social status concerns vis-a`-vis their victims" (p. 611). They further suggest that a confrontational style may reinforce attitudes that "are grounded in coercion and control, rather than in understanding, trust, and support" (p. 609).

McKendy (1992) claims to have witnessed as a participant observer, the irony of a model that drew heavily on feminism seeming to reinforce the very sexist attitudes and behaviours it was hoping to change. He maintains

> that participating in the official discourse meant that the men had to block out their emotion-laden experiences of constraint and powerlessness, and recognize themselves as fully rational, autonomous and self-possessed agents. Many of them seemed unwilling and/or unable to do this, and reacted either by resisting their treatment, or by limiting their involvement in the process (p.60).

McKendy identified what he termed the "official discourse of abuse" (p. 71), where the men were admonished not to forget why they were there. While the underlying principle was that men must

[15] See Healey, Smith and O'Sullivan (1998) for a comprehensive discussion of batterer intervention program models. Those who advocate in-depth group counselling in addition to reeducation and skills building (e.g., EMERGE of Quincy, Massachusetts and AMEND of Denver, Colorado), argue that longer term intervention is necessary to "break through the batterer's facade of compliance" (p. 47).

take responsibility for their own feelings and behaviour, the confrontational process of reinforcing that principle denied them the opportunity to listen to, learn from, or express, their feelings, one of the "crucial components of feminist praxis" (p. 64). McKendy states:

> I saw the men being offered an image of themselves as persons with agency. Great effort was expended by the counselor, trying to convince them that this was how they actually (already) were. The verbal alchemy consisted of repeating the incantation of individual responsibility: "You are a person who makes choices. Your anger is a choice. Your violence is a choice." I became convinced that most of the men, most of the time, were simply unable to recognize themselves in that image and unable to make themselves over into that image. Far from experiencing themselves as makers of choices, they felt overwhelmed by external factors. They spoke in ways that indicated that they experienced their own feelings and behavior as largely determined, rather than freely willed. In other words, they felt acutely their own lack of agency. Yet they were systematically prevented from expressing this feeling (p. 75).

Claiming the feminist rhetoric actually reinforced sexist attitudes and behaviours, McKendy suggests the men were left alone to deal with their "(now reified) 'abusive behaviors'".... "[their] anger became a peculiar possession; owning it did not confer rights, but rather removed them" (p. 77).

An alternative therapeutic approach as defined by Augusta-Scott (1999), "constructs men as desiring respectful and caring relationships [rather than] as desiring power and control over their female partners" (p. 18), or as "liking it,... [and] doing it because they can" (p. 67). The resultant narrative approach "involve[s] inviting the men to consider their desires for respectful relationships and to examine the effects of the violence on their desires" (p. v.). Augusta-Scott suggests the focus of the educational approach on challenge and confrontation, constructs men as "bad", a perception that may have its origin in a desire to avoid colluding with the men in avoiding criminal sanctions. The narrative approach as defined by Alan Jenkins, describes men who use violence rather, as "good but misguided" (p. 67). In encouraging men to examine their own experiences of injustice, the approach is described as compatible with an expectation that men assume responsibility for their violent behaviour[16].

A few theorists point a way forward in relation to program content and research rigour. Davis and Taylor (1999) offer several recommendations for future research:

- randomized experiments should be the design of choice. While recognizing the

[16] Healey et al., (1998) note the resistence among some practitioners to "incorporating consideration of individual psychology ... in interventions because they are concerned the individual approach will eclipse consideration of the sociological factors emphasized by the prevailing feminist model" (p. 28). The authors suggest the critical issue from a criminal justice perspective is simply "what works". If mixed-model interventions are shown to be effective, "questions of theory are likely to become secondary" (p. 28).

difficulty of applying this model to judicial mandates, they suggest true experimental designs are possible in jurisdictions where intervention mandates are at the discretion of the probation agency;

- standardization of measures and follow-up intervals is necessary to compare results across studies;
- standards against which the intervention is being evaluated must be explicit;
- researchers must find ways to minimize attrition;
- researchers ought to make explicit issues which may restrict the extent to which findings may be generalized;
- researchers need to find ways to maximize response rates when interviewing female partners about continuing abuse (pp. 86-90).

Regarding content, Dutton (1998) advocates for programming that addresses the psychological underpinnings of abusiveness. In relation to research rigour, Davis and Taylor (1999) are encouraged by increased sophistication of the most recent studies, and suggest that "we soon should be able to say whether batterer interventions work and to specify which program models are most effective" (p. 89).

The most recent studies have yet to reflect this optimism. In a study examining the relative effectiveness of four men's intervention programs (n = 230), Hanson and Wallace-Capretta (2000a) found variations in program content to result in little difference in recidivism rates. The study examined four programs located in different regions of Canada, and operating with different philosophical models (cognitive-behavioural, humanistic-existential, feminist/psycho-educational, and eclectic). The programs selected for study were intended to represent those typically available in Canada, rather than being considered exemplary. Program integrity, rather than content or philosophy, was considered to have an impact on recidivism rates, although the effect was only marginally significant. The study suggests that "[w]hen no differences are found between treatment approaches, it is difficult to tell whether the programs are equally effective or equally poor" (p. 12), and concludes that the essential elements of effective intervention remain unknown.

Research continues, to identify variables related to change in abusive behaviour (Scott & Wolfe, 2000), the cost of batterer programs (Jones, 2000), methods men use to avoid reassault (Gondolf, 2000a), consumer recommendations for program content (Gondolf & White, 2000), and the value of mandatory court review on batterer program compliance (Gondolf, 2000b). Such increasingly rigorous research will continue to influence and shape program content and design.

3.0 Beyond Traditional Interventions - Toward a Comprehensive Approach

3.1 Programming for a Continuum of Violence Severity

The literature reveals a call made for interventions that recognize differences in male violence and female victimization, recognizing that there are a variety of familial contexts in which violence occurs (Sluzki, 1993). To date almost all interventions for men have been aimed at all types of male violence (Saunders, 1992). Additionally, criticism has been made of the limited sampling among studies of spouse abuse generally, with a call being made for research on female victimization in other than shelter-seeking samples (Houskamp & Foy, 1991, Astin et al., 1993, Saunders, 1994, cited in Schlee et al., 1998). It is suggested that "studying only the most extreme subgroup of abused women (i.e., shelter samples) may not be a truly representative, or even the most common, sample of abused women" (Schlee et al., 1998). For example, it is suggested that "a continuum of abuse severity exists along with subgroups of relationships and abused women may be qualitatively different with distinct treatment needs" (O'Leary,1993, cited in Schlee et al., 1998, p. 3). Saunders (1994) found that "violence severity and learned helplessness declined linearly across shelter groups, support groups not seeking shelter, and abused women not seeking help, respectively" (Schlee et al., 1998, p. 3). Additionally, research shows that interventions and their type, appropriateness, timing, and patterning may help explain variations in the relationship between estrangement and intimate femicide on the one hand and reintegration or conciliation on the other (Ellis & DeKeseredy, 1997).

Goldner (1999) maintains the long history of divisiveness and mutual isolation the literature reveals has gravely compromised outcome research. The literature reflects an increasing recognition of the necessity of a multidimensional, "integrated, holistic approach" (Myers, 1996, p. 15). A coordinated response is increasingly called for, "integrating criminal justice, social service, mental health and community" (Myers, 1996, p. 15). Further, there is increasing recognition that the potential for success of any intervention strategy is contingent in part upon the degree to which it is culturally and linguistically appropriate (Almeida & Durkin, 1999). Myers (1996) notes that in general, mainstream strategies have failed to address the cultural values and needs of different ethno-cultural groups.

3.2 Conjoint Interventions

Some theorists maintain that employing the relational bond in interventions with couples is essential to ensuring women's safety and initiating change (Goldner, 1999). Theorists however have identified that interventions with couples, which have their root in family systems theory (Johannson & Tutty, 1998), are not appropriate for all batterer types (Saunders, 1992; Ellis & DeKeseredy, 1997), and the timing of the intervention may have an impact on its effectiveness (Ellis & DeKeseredy, 1997). The issue of interventions involving couples is controversial (Johannson & Tutty, 1998; Trute, 1998; Almeida & Durkin, 1999; Bograd & Mederos, 1999; Goldner, 1999). Some theorists and clinicians maintain interventions with the couple are appropriate only after the violence has stopped (Rosenbaum, & O'Leary, 1986, Pressman, 1989, Philpot, 1991, cited in Johannson & Tutty, 1998; McMahon & Pence, 1996; Hiebert-Murphy & Trute, 1998; Trute, 1998). Others question, in cases

where it is clear women want to stay with their partners, whether it is ethically justifiable not to provide some treatment for the couple at some point (O'Leary, 1996)[17]. McMahon and Pence (1996), while not arguing that couple counselling is never appropriate, believe couples' counsellors must address two major issues: the problem of how the mental health system has colluded in male violence against women[18] and the closely related problem of how domestic violence is conceptualized. Hiebert-Murphy and Trute (1998) maintain, that "[i]ncreasingly ... there is a recognition that the question should not be whether or not to use conjoint therapy, but rather, when and under what conditions is this intervention appropriate" (p. 1).

Berns et al. (1999) claim that "therapists in general, and couple therapists in particular, have often operated in an information vacuum....partly because the relevant research did not have obvious clinical implications"(p. 337). The "trial and error" method of developing interventions, described by Jory, Anderson, and College (1999, p. 353) may be evidence of the research void. Echoing earlier theorists (Bograd, 1992), in claiming there are still "two different worlds: the community of domestic violence advocates and the constituency of family therapists", Bern et al. maintain "[i]t is still the exception rather than the norm for family therapists to receive state-of-the-art training in detecting domestic violence in their couples[19], assessing the lethality of batterers, and knowing when to refer to specialists in batterers' treatment and discontinue couple therapy" (pp. 337-338). They suggest that recent research related to batterer subtypes stands to offer invaluable information to both researchers and clinicians.

The justification for clinical work with couples when violence is the presenting problem must be found in other than outcome research, which is "still too rudimentary to serve as a guide" (Goldner, 1998, p. 265). Goldner presents some of the risks and benefits of those justifications which are grounded in the "extraordinarily intense, mutual reactivity" (p. 265) of the partners[20]. She claims men

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[17] Brannen and Rubin (1996), citing other theorists (Feazell, Mayers, & Dreschner, 1984; Purdy, & Nickle, 1981), agree, stating that it would seem reasonable for legislators to provide funding for couples programs, given that 50%-75% of women decide to remain with their male partners following incidents of violence "despite the best efforts of police, prosecutors, shelters, and advocates" (p. 421). Johannson and Tutty (1998) note that even if the partnership ends, individuals may develop future relationships where similar patterns of abuse may develop.

[18] McMahon and Pence (1996) claim that in the past violence has been framed as primarily a mental or physical health problem (i.e., a medical or psychological, rather than social problem), which has allowed professionals to control both the definition and treatment to the exclusion of individuals' first hand experience or knowledge. McMahon and Pence note that mental health professions acknowledged woman abuse as a problem only when forced to do so by victims of violence.

[19] McMahon and Pence (1996) suggest that rather than recognizing the violent behaviour as the primary treatment issue, family therapists have perceived it as a symptom of a larger or underlying problem. This has typically resulted in an inadequate consideration of safety measures.

[20] Johannson and Tutty (1998) cite theorists (Bedrosian, 1982; Magill, 1989) who perceive the cause of wife abuse as the interrelationship of abuser and victim characteristics; the interactional, homeostatic patterns are thought to maintain the couples' complementary needs (Pressman, 1989).

and women want couples' therapy because, being so intensely focused on the relationship they "cannot or will not consider working separately" (p. 265). This preference is understood as being often part of the problem. Couples' therapy may be the only form of treatment acceptable to the man because, including the woman from the beginning, it may be seen to convey the message that she is co-responsible for the abuse (see also Russell, as cited in Johannson & Tutty, 1998). While Goldner denies this tendency to blame the victim[21], she advocates that male violence is "woven into the confusing melodrama of the couples' involvement", witnessed in an "intense attachment" (p. 265) that "makes separation both unlikely and very dangerous" (p. 266). She claims it is the power of the relational bond that cannot be addressed by seeing the partners separately. Bograd and Mederos (1999) express caution, suggesting that "rationales in favor of couples treatment with marital violence may be premature" (p. 293), and practitioners may not be competently considering the woman's safety or the effectiveness of the intervention. They further suggest the likelihood is great that violence is under-identified. They nevertheless suggest circumstances under which family therapists may ethically investigate the "efficacy and wisdom of couples work for some batterers and their families" (p. 309).

Minimizing risk to the female partner and a consideration of safety is central (Bograd & Mederos, 1999; Goldner, 1999). Bograd and Mederos advocate family therapists universally assess couples for violence, identifying those couples for whom the intervention would not be appropriate. Prior to presenting assessment guidelines and criteria for initiating couples work, they offer three preconditions of assessment: 1. that the man's participation is voluntary rather than court-ordered, 2. that the rules of confidentiality be modified to ensure that information obtained from the woman in the individual assessment is not disclosed in couples meetings before she is willing, and 3. that the stance of the therapist be self-monitored in relation to self-protection, compassion, fairness, and appropriate allocation of responsibility for the violent behaviour.

A review of the literature revealed three studies evaluating the effectiveness of couples' interventions (Brannen & Rubin, 1996; Johannson & Tutty, 1998; Schlee et al., 1998), and a fourth study that is ongoing (Hiebert-Murphy & Trute, 1998). An earlier review of the literature (Edleson & Tollman, 1992, cited in Johannson &Tutty, 1998) found a number of advocates for the approach but few evaluations of its effectiveness.

Brannen and Rubin (1996), in a study comparing the effectiveness of gender-specific and couples groups in a court-mandated program, employed random assignment of 49 couples to one of two treatment groups, and pre and post-tests to assess five outcome objectives: conflict resolution ability, level of violence, level of communication within the relationship, level of marital satisfaction, and prevention of recidivism. They conclude that "the couples group format was at least as effective as the batterer-only groups for the majority of subjects, and superior for those with an alcohol-related problem" (p. 421). In relation to client safety, weekly qualitative assessments from female partners revealed they "were in no more danger than those receiving treatment in the gender-specific groups"

[21] Goldner maintains that to say "that partners mutually *participate* in an interactional process does not mean they are mutually *responsible* for it, or for its catastrophic outcome" (p. 266).

(p. 405). The authors suggest however that extreme caution should be exercised in generalizing the results. As all male subjects were court-mandated, it is anticipated the results may reflect supervision associated with probation. Further, as the study did not employ a non treatment control group, it is not clear if results achieved are related to program participation or other unrelated factors.

Johannson and Tutty (1998) evaluated an after-treatment model, previously unreported in the literature. The intervention was offered by the Calgary YWCA Support Centre: Alternatives to Domestic Abuse at the request of members of gender-specific groups offered by the agency; in follow-up feedback sessions men had indicated they were able to apply communication and conflict resolution skills they had learned with friends and co-workers but were experiencing difficulty using these skills with their partners at home. The after-treatment model was designed with the goal of aiding couples in integrating the communication, problem solving, and conflict resolution skills previously learned in the 24 week gender-specific groups. The groups consisted of 12 weekly two hour sessions, co-led by a male/female social work team. Safety considerations were employed: pre-screening of couples for exclusion where severe physical abuse was occurring, with a recommendation that they repeat the gender-specific group, weekly check-ins for the occurrence of violent incidents or close-calls, private interviews with each participant every four weeks to ask about the presence of physical abuse, encouragement to contact group facilitators in the event of a crisis, and post-session diffusing and development of safety plans when safety concerns arose during the context of a group.

Two groups using identical formats were evaluated, using a pre/post-test quasi-experimental design. The total sample consisted of 13 couples. Based on the results, the authors suggest "the couples' after-treatment group may be a promising intervention ... [although] results cannot be generalized" (p. 32) because of "a lack of control group, small sample size and the possibility of experimenter bias" (p. 34). Follow-up results with 11 couples after one year found mixed results; seven couples remained in the relationship, with four reporting no further incidents of abuse. Johannson and Tutty propose that as the goal of the group was to improve skill functioning rather than necessarily keeping the couple together, the fact that a number of the couples chose to end the relationship when violence recurred suggests progress. An unintended benefit of the group intervention was the reported use of "more democratic parenting" (p. 33) by many of the couples, "a change [which] could constitute prevention of the children's developing abusive styles with their own offspring" (p. 33). The authors suggest that the need for conjoint counselling at some point if couples choose to remain together is confirmed in the requests received for the service due to stated difficulty in applying with intimate partners, the skills taught in the gender-specific groups. They conclude finally that a 12 week intervention may not be of sufficient length, and that the model would "likely not work well with couples with multiple problems and who were crisis-prone" (p. 34)

Schlee et al. (1998) studied the association of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) with treatment effectiveness among 27 women who participated, with their partners, in a group treatment program. The authors state that although in various samples from 33% to 84% of woman abused by their partners met the DSM-IV criteria for PTSD (Cascardi et al., 1995, Dutton, 1992, Gleason, 1993, Houskamp & Foy, 1991, Kemp et al., 1991, cited in Schlee et al., 1998), its association with

treatment effectiveness in conjoint intervention models has not been examined. The aim of the conjoint model of intervention, focusing on violence cessation, anger control, and communications skills, was to eliminate abusive incidents within a format that required both partners' participation. Couples were randomly assigned to either a couples, or a gender-specific treatment program. Both involved psychoeducational formats, conducted in 14 two-hour weekly sessions. Eligibility requirements included: at least two episodes of physical aggression by the male partner in the past year, both partners' willingness to participate, the woman could not have extreme fear of participating in a couples group with her male partner, and physical aggression had not resulted in hospitalization or injuries more severe than bruises. Schlee et al. conclude "abused women with PTSD resulting from their husband's mild to moderate abuse can indeed benefit from group treatment focused on eliminating the physical aggression" (p. 15). PTSD diagnosis was not associated with pre-treatment dropout nor was it associated with treatment outcome. Women with PTSD achieved parallel treatment gains with women without PTSD on goals such as an increase in marital satisfaction and a decrease in depressive symptomotology. In addition the study found no association between PTSD diagnosis and treatment outcome on measures of physical and psychological abuse. Schlee et al. caution against generalizing the results, which were limited to an almost entirely White middle class sample of couples who reported a mild to moderately severe level of male aggression. They suggest the findings "may not generalize to more severe samples, such as women in shelters or experiencing life-threatening abuse" (p. 17).

Hiebert-Murphy and Trute (1998) cite a rationale for their work in The Couples Project[22] in a recommendation of the Lavoie Commission of Inquiry, identifying the need for programs offering conjoint treatment for offenders and victims. The program, operating at the Elizabeth Hill Counselling Centre, is described as a second stage treatment program that is only appropriate for couples when the violence has stopped, the perpetrator has accepted responsibility for the violence, the partners wish to work on improving their relationship, and there is a commitment to non-violence (p. 10). The intervention is clearly identified as being an adjunct rather than a substitute for the involvement of the criminal jsutice system. Referrals are received from first stage gender-specific treatment programs, from other agencies, and from clients themselves. Couples may not participate when there are outstanding charges (Hiebert-Murphy, 2000). The primary service goals are: "1) to offer preventative, relationship therapy to couples who wish to remain together following the cessation of partner violence, and 2) to work with couples to help them understand the ways in which the violence has impacted on their children and to facilitate positive parenting in which parents show their children that violence is no longer tolerated as an aspect of family life" (p. 8). Process and outcome evaluation of the project is ongoing. Pre and post-test data (assessing the presence of violence and the quality of the relationship) are collected to assess the effectiveness of the intervention.

[22] The Couples Project has been funded by Family Dispute Services, Department of Family Services, Manitoba since October, 1998.

3.3 Service Coordination

The literature reflects increasing calls for the integration of the traditionally separate roles of clerks, judges, Crown attorneys, probation officers, police officers, and batterer intervention counsellors. This is evident in the emergence of specialized courts in prosecuting domestic violence cases, and in increasing efforts to provide a coordinated community and justice response arising from recommendations of Coroner's Inquests (Joint Committee on Domestic Violence, 1999) and investigations[23].

While early efforts to provide unified interventions focussed on reforming individual components of the justice system, there is increasing recognition of the complexity of the issue and an understanding that the solution cannot lie with any one sector (Clark, Burt, Schulte, & Maguire, 1996; Nicholl, 1998; Joint Committee on Domestic Violence, 1999; Hart, cited in Shepard, 1999). The challenge of coordination lies not only in communication across sectors, but in a required interweaving of "theories [of the etiology of domestic violence] and interventions that are conflicting and contradictory" (Crump, 2000, p. 26)[24]. It is increasingly recognized that despite the challenges, and the years of working in isolation, the various sectors have begun to influence one another's thinking. It is believed by some that "the field may be prepared to move into a more sophisticated phase of its inquiry without having to reiterate the old arguments every time" (Goldner, quoted in Crump, 2000).

Shepard (1999), in a summary and analysis of research on coordinated community responses to domestic violence, distinguishes between efforts at coordination involving the justice system, advocacy, and men's intervention programs, and a more comprehensive community coordination requiring a response that addresses other social problems that contribute to violence (e.g., poverty, adequate housing, affordable childcare, and child support enforcement). Components of a coordinated community response (former) include: pro-arrest or mandatory arrest policies, follow-up support and advocacy for victims, aggressive and prompt prosecution, active monitoring of offender compliance with probation conditions, court-mandated participation in men's intervention programs, and monitoring of the system-wide response to domestic violence cases (Shepard, 1999, p. 1). While coordination efforts have traditionally focussed on the justice system[25], advocacy, and programs for

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[23] Most recently within Nova Scotia, the Departments of Justice and Community Services, in separate reviews following the deaths of Lori Lee Maxwell and Bruce Allan George, each recommended the establishment of policies and procedures to initiate interagency coordination in family violence situations. See *Department of Justice Program Review* (2000) and *Maxwell/George Case Review* (2000).

[24] An overview of the various discourses and resultant theories attempting to explain woman abuse in intimate relationships is included as Appendix A.

[25] For example, several publications of the Policing and Reducing Crime Unit, Home Office Research, Development and Statistics Directorate, London, describe what are considered to be effective organizational structures, policing, and outreach and advocacy approaches. In Nova Scotia as in several other provinces within Canada, specific partnership programs have been developed to offer added protection to victims, e.g., *Victims First Emergency Cellular Telephone Pilot Program*, 1999.

men who use violence, attention in recent years has been given to broadening the response to include health care (*Health Sector United Against Family Violence*, 2000), child welfare[26], substance abuse treatment, and religious institutions (Clark et al., cited in Shepard, 1999).

Shepard identifies three principle types of coordination: 1) community intervention projects [nonprofit agencies that are external to the criminal justice system and rooted in the battered women's movement]; 2) criminal justice system-based reform projects [innovative programs from within the criminal justice system that focus on integrated case management, for example, the Quincy District Court in Massachusetts]; and 3) coordinating councils [formed in communities to provide a forum for interagency communication and collaboration] (p. 2). A study of coordinated community responses in six communities (Clark et al., 1996) found some type of coordinating council present in each effort. Kiefl (1999a) provides a similar overview of partnership orientations[27] in his assessment of multidisciplinary approaches to justice problems and integrated justice (not specific to spousal/partner violence), adding a fourth "inter-system" approach that seeks to improve cooperation between the justice system and other public systems (e.g., education).

Shepard found that most studies have focussed on individual components of coordinated intervention, rather than the entire community response. She cites two studies (Jaffe, Hastings, Reitzel & Austin, 1993; Tolman & Weisz, 1995) that report inconclusive results after examining the impact of individual components of a coordinated response, and which call for more study of the combined effects of community interventions.

Shepard cites several difficulties associated with evaluating individual components of a coordinated community response without considering other or subsequent interventions:

- few studies have examined the use of different practices within the criminal justice system other than arrest, for example, pre-trial diversion to a counselling program[28];

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[26] See Schechter and Edleson (1994), and Griffith (2000).

[27] Kiefl categorizes the orientations as: community partnerships, justice system coordination, inter-system cooperation, and holistic approaches. Kiefl defines community partnerships as involving justice agencies and community partners in addressing a justice problem. This definition differs from that of Shepard (1999), who defines community intervention projects as external to the criminal justice system and rooted in the battered women's movement.

[28] See Moyer (2000) for a review of the practice of pre-trial diversion, available in many locations in the United States. Court-ordered counselling is initiated for batterers post-charge/pre-conviction, with charges dropped after successful completion of the program. Moyer notes the prime disadvantage of diversion is the perception that its use trivializes domestic violence (see also Healey et al., 1998). Moyer notes further that failure to monitor referrals may result in an insufficient sanction for non-compliance. One program in New York state, considered controversial from the outset, was phased-out after a six-month trial. The reason cited was failure of the courts to respond appropriately in cases of failed diversion (Heberley, 2000). Moyer notes few Canadian jurisdictions permit pre-trial diversion. Note: diversion is distinguished from an early intervention model which involves a sentencing component (see Partner Assault Response programs below).

- studies that have compared the impact of arrest to other forms of police response have failed to consider subsequent prosecution, sentencing and rehabilitation outcomes, the availability of victim advocacy and support services, or the comparative impact of different policies, practices and beliefs that may have influenced the outcomes;

- the carrying out of one component may not lead to the expected outcomes in other parts of the system. For example, the effect of conviction may be diminished by the failure to enforce the requirement of counselling program attendance;

- men's intervention programs have been studied largely in isolation from other components of a coordinated response;

- though advocacy programs for victims form an integral part of a coordinated response, there has been little formal evaluation of them.

Each of these difficulties points to the desirability of system-wide evaluations "to understand the impact of different components of a coordinated community response, and the effectiveness of the overall response" (p. 5). Shepard concludes her analysis by claiming that "[w]hile the successes of individual components of a coordinated response have been modest, there is evidence that combining these approaches in a coordinated approach reduces future incidents of violence" (p. 6). Preliminary studies suggest however that coordinated responses are not as effective with offenders who have had previous involvement with the criminal justice system (p. 6).

In a descriptive review of coordinated community responses in six communities Clark et al. (1996), though not suggesting there are definitive answers about the best approach to a coordinated response, identify a number of issues for agencies involved. Specific requirements for an effective coordinated response are suggested to include:

- the existence, in each component of the criminal justice system, of appropriate policies that are followed in practice;

- consistency in handling of cases;

- policies that include attention to the victim as a standard practice;

- training and policies to include all staff (versus a specialized staff that risks complacency on the part of others);

- inclusion of other than traditional battered women's service providers, as shelters do not serve all women who require assistance (for example, cooperative service arrangements);

- identifying agency service strengths and weaknesses, as well as gaps in the system of available services;

- widespread education and prevention activities.

Kiefl (1999a) notes that a comprehensive view of integrated justice involves not only multidisciplinary partnerships focussed around a specific project or social problem but an approach that "look[s] beyond project or problem oriented attempts to integrate work ... toward the integration of policy development and decision-making across all agencies involved in social policy issues" (p. vii). In his assessment of best practices Kiefl notes this orientation was rarely noted. Challenges to this approach were observed:

- role and representation of members - who should represent government, for whom government representatives speak, ensuring accountability for all partners;

- defining a working definition of inclusivity, and defining partnership criteria;

- problems associated with developing a non-hierarchical structure, and establishing a decision-making process and criterion.

In his report on best practices and lessons learned in effective multidisciplinary justice projects, Kiefl notes family violence was targeted in only six initiatives reported from the 13 jurisdictions across the country. All but one are described as involving interventions that are adjunctive to the formal justice system response. Characteristic best practices include: flexibility to adapt to community needs, partnerships with other credible services (government and community), a focussed and appropriate use of the justice system, and a comprehensive response to family violence. Evidence of formal evaluation was indicated in only one initiative[29]; results beyond best practices and lessons learned were not reported by Kiefl (1999b).

Selected examples of what may be described as community partnership initiatives as defined by Kiefl (1999a) were located elsewhere in the literature, although it is recognized that limited data from empirical studies are available on the effectiveness of coordinated interventions (Murphy, Musser, & Maton, 1998).

Sullivan and Keefe (n.d.) report on the effectiveness of three community intervention projects in increasing arrest and successful prosecution (Gamache, Edleson & Schock, 1988), and in deterring re-abuse (Steinman, 1990; Syers & Edleson, 1992). As community intervention projects were introduced in three communities Gamache et al. found a significant increase in the number of arrests relative to calls received by police, increased successful prosecutions, and an increase in the number

[29] A midpoint evaluation of the Provincial Partnership Committee on Family Violence, Saskatchewan, was completed in February, 1994 by the Social Administration Research Unit.

of perpetrators mandated into men's intervention programs. Sullivan and Keefe suggest "this study provides powerful evidence that community intervention projects can have a significant positive impact on the criminal justice response to woman abuse" (p. 3). Steinman (1990) found that when police action was coordinated with other systems perpetrators were significantly less likely to reoffend. Syers and Edleson (1992) confirmed this finding, and confirmed further, that when police action was *not* coordinated (i.e., men were arrested but not mandated into men's intervention programs) offenders were more likely to recidivate.

Jolin and Moose (1997), on the other hand, report inconclusive results from some of the same studies. While findings from four studies (Soler, 1987; Gamache et al., 1988; Steinman, 1988; Edleson, 1991) "support the hypothesis that a coordinated criminal justice response that increases prosecutions and consequently opens the door to sanctions or treatment, may lower recidivism" (pp. 283-284), Jolin and Moose cite methodological limitations suggesting that firm conclusions cannot be drawn.

Murphy et al. (1998) report cautious optimism regarding the effectiveness of coordinated community interventions. In a study of cases (n = 235) handled by the Baltimore, Maryland State's Attorney's Domestic Violence Unit, court orders for domestic violence counselling were associated with significantly lower recidivism (thus replicating the findings of Syers and Edleson,1992), despite the fact that less than 20% of those who were court ordered actually completed the counselling program. Murphy et al. suggest that the court order to counselling may itself provide a motivation to behaviour change. Findings are however, considered to be initial and exploratory in nature, and further research is encouraged.

Caputo and Moynihan (1986) describe a practice/research model, utilizing a project team comprised of two social workers, two community advocates, and one lawyer. It was hypothesized that 1) identification and intervention of domestic violence situations could be effected early if the project obtained police referrals, based on the belief that people called "911" one or more times before turning to social agencies for help, 2) the mix of professional staff would help victims find their way through the court process more easily; and 3) researchers could measure the impact of the program on police behaviour and thus learn more about how accurate police procedures were in capturing the incidents of domestic violence. It is concluded the joint effort made it possible to sustain and systematically link a family service agency with major judicial and law-enforcement agencies to induce change. The joint venture further made it possible to construct baseline data against which to measure and judge the merits of both current and future intervention efforts.

A similar effort, initiated in Vancouver in 1997, was modeled after the City of Edmonton Family Violence Follow-Up Team (Family Services of Greater Vancouver & Vancouver Police Department, 2000). Though strengths and challenges and lessons learned have been documented, formal evaluation has not been completed.

The Domestic Violence Court Process Model in Ontario (Ministry of the Attorney General, 2000), providing an early intervention component and a coordinated prosecution component provides an example of a criminal justice system-based reform effort that involves a community partnership with

men's intervention programs.

Partner Assault Response (PAR) programs have been developed in Ontario as one component of the Specialized Domestic Violence Court Process. Under the PAR program, offenders with no convictions for violence-related offences, who have caused no significant injuries or harm, have not used weapons, and who choose to plead guilty, are considered by the Crown for an early intervention process[30]. After consultation with the victim, the offender is referred, and is expected to complete the men's intervention counselling program to the Court's satisfaction. Following program completion, agency staff submit a completion report for consideration at sentencing. Successful completion usually results in a conditional discharge and 9 months probation (Kitchen, 2000). If the offender does not complete the program, or re-offends during it, a new charge may be laid (Ministry of the Attorney General, 2000). Currently, the Specialized Domestic Violence Court Process exists in 16 sites in Ontario. A similar program exists in New York state (Robinson, 2000). Program evaluations are unavailable to date.

A report with recommendations is available on the community intervention model for court mandated offenders, that was developed in Toronto by the Metro Woman Abuse Council (MWAC) and integrated into the Domestic Violence Court Process (The ARA Consulting Group, 1998). The primary focus of the model is in providing effective intervention programs for men who have exhibited violence toward an intimate partner. Adherence to specified standards has been established as a criteria for inclusion on a roster of agencies maintained by the Council. A centralized intake worker coordinates referrals, and communication between agencies is achieved through participation in monthly meetings. The program is monitored and performance measures have been established. A list of ten recommendations for refinement of the model are included in the review. Sample recommendations include an annual review of, and contract with, rostered agencies, specific guidelines and follow-up procedures regarding partner contact, expansion of program length from 16 weeks to six months, offenders' fee for the service set by the Courts, and an increase provincial fee contribution to the programs as many offenders are unable to contribute the full amount currently suggested by the Courts.

Recently a recommendation was advanced in Ontario that a community coordinating committee[31] be

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[30] Note: the Partner Assault Response program is considered an early intervention model, and is distinguished from diversion, as PAR maintains a sentencing component rather than being diverted out of the court process (Kitchen, 2000). The Domestic Violence Treatment Option (2001) in the Yukon is a similar court-based alternative that requires an early guilty plea, with sentencing delayed until the offender completes recommended programming.

[31] It is recommended that participation on community coordinating committees include the following members: police, victim crisis services/emergency response, Crown attorney, Victim/Witness Assistance Programs, Probation and Parole, Community-based support/advocacy agencies, Shelters, Men's Intervention Programs, Child Protection Agencies, Health professionals (including hospitals/clinics). It is suggested that Judges, Duty Counsel, Defense counsel, Cultural interpreters, and Coroners be invited on an "as required" basis. See Joint Committee on Domestic Violence, 1999, pp. 95-96.

established in every court jurisdiction (Joint Committee on Domestic Violence, 1999). Interagencies on Family Violence within Nova Scotia have existed in recent years to provide a similar coordinating function. Recently within the Halifax Regional Municipality a subcommittee of the Metro Interagency on Family Violence has formed to address what is perceived to be an ongoing need for enhanced coordination. Though its work is early, this committee is focussing its attention on the experience of the London Coordinating Committee to End Woman Abuse (1992), established in 1980 as a network of social, health, education, and justice services. Similarly, a subcommittee of the Cape Breton Interagency on Family Violence formed in 1998 to enhance collegial relations among key agencies responding to family violence and enhance coordination of the community's overall response (*Bridging the Gaps*, 1999). The committee has identified perceived gaps in each service area and formulated recommendations related to education, resources, protocols, policies and coordination. With respect to the latter, the committee calls for an enhancement of the Interagency's role in coordinating the overall community response to incidents of family violence[32].

A comprehensive inventory of promising practices in the United States has been developed as a tool for communities to develop coordinated responses (Littel, Malefyt, & Walker, 1998). Reported as promising practices, assessments of effectiveness may be assumed. Though evaluations are sometimes referenced, results are not included in the material. Littel et al. nonetheless indicate, that the effectiveness of the intervention depends on the implementation of the following activities:

- development of a common philosophical framework;
- establishment of consistent policies for intervening agencies;
- monitoring and tracking individual cases to ensure practitioner accountability;
- coordination of the exchange of information and inter-agency communications;
- provision of resources and services to victims;
- sanction, restrictions and services for offenders;
- protection of any children involved; and
- evaluation of the coordinated justice system response from the victims' perspective[33].

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[32] Earlier work on coordinating efforts within Nova Scotia was initiated a decade ago under the sponsorship of Public Legal Education Society (now Legal Information Society of Nova Scotia)and Nova Scotia Family and Child Welfare Association (now Nova Scotia Council for the Family). See Lambert (1991), *Regional Workshops: A Team Approach to Family Violence Cases.*

[33] Littel et al., 1998, p. 3, as identified by the Duluth Domestic Abuse Intervention Project (DAIP), pp. 14-17.

A final note regarding the coordination of efforts to respond to woman abuse must be stated in noting the absence of references in the general material specifically related to the experiences of First Nations women, women who are new Canadians, or women living in rural areas. Differences in such central notions as conceptions of justice, patterns of decision making, and social interaction have implications for the involvement of outside agencies, and must be considered in efforts to provide a coordinated response to woman abuse[34].

3.4 Risk Assessment[35]

In addition to improving existing services, and exploring new initiatives and coordinated efforts to increase the safety of women assaulted by their intimate partners, battered women's activists, researchers, and public policy makers have made efforts to improve their understanding of the ability to assess risk related to both re-offending and lethality/dangerousness. Researchers note that domestic violence risk prediction is in its infancy (Roehl, cited in Campbell, n.d.; Roehl & Guertin, 2000), that data on the reliability, validity, and predictive accuracy of risk assessment tools is so scarce (Roehl & Guertin, 2000; Bennett, Goodman & Dutton, 2000), as to be "practically non-existent" (Websdale, 2001, p. 1), and that no instrument can ever be a foolproof predictive tool (Goodman, Dutton & Bennet, 2000) as there is a lack of "solid evidence of causal relationships between danger signs and subsequent severe violence" (Roehl & Guertin, 2000, p. 174). It is recognized that despite every effort based on knowledge to date, there is no certain way to guarantee safety for victims of spousal/intimate partner violence (Campbell, n.d.; Coombe, 1999). There are those who even suggest that "[t]he search for certainty through sophisticated risk assessment" (McLeod, quoted in Coombe, 1999, p. 7) may increase the danger for women in directing attention to predicting problems rather than building solutions.

Roehl and Guertin (2000) have compiled risk factors that have been incorporated into dangerousness assessments (see Appendix B); it is noted that past violence has typically been the major variable. Websdale (2001), in an analysis of multiple killings (47 cases involving 104 victims, including children) and single killings (67 adult female victims) in Florida, reported the following antecedents, in order of importance:

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[34] See *Bridging the Gap: Understanding Family Violence in New Canadian Communities* (2000).

[35] Risk assessment is described as "the formal application of instruments to assess the likelihood that intimate partner violence will be repeated or escalated" (Roehl & Guertin, 2000, p. 171). Roehl and Guertin define the term as synonymous with dangerousness assessment and encompassing lethality assessment, which has similar but not identical risk factors. Campbell (n.d.) notes the distinction between lethality/dangerousness and reoffending, and the importance of specifying what is being measured when selecting the instrument to be used. Websdale (2001) prefers the term "dangerousness" over "lethality" assessment. Websdale suggests that as there is a range or continuum of violence, and "entrapment [which typically seems to intensify over time] underpins abusive intimate relationships" (p. 1), the absolute distinction between lethal and non-lethal cases/relationships is a false dichotomy.

→ a prior history of domestic violence.

→ an estrangement, separation, or an attempt at separation nearly always by the woman.

→ a display of obsessive-possessiveness or morbid jealousy on the part of the eventual perpetrator; often accompanied by suicidal ideations, plans or attempts; depression (clinical or more rarely, psychotic); sleep disturbances (sometimes under treatment medically), and stalking of the victim.

→ prior police contact with the parties, more so in cases of single killings; often accompanied by perpetrators failing to be deterred by police interventions or other criminal justice initiatives.

→ perpetrator makes threats to kill victim; often providing details of intended modus operandi and communicating those in some form or other, however subtle, to the victim herself, family members, friends, colleagues at work, or others.

→ perpetrator is familiar with the use of violence and sometimes has a prior criminal history of violence.

→ perpetrator consumes large amounts of alcohol and/or drugs immediately preceding the fatality, especially in cases of single killings.

→ victim has a restraining order against perpetrator at time of killing.

In a critical analysis of the research into lethality assessment instruments, Websdale, noted only one (Jacquelyn Campbell, Danger Assessment Instrument) that is largely based upon a homicide dataset. Most others "derive from a generalized appreciation ... of what [has been] gleaned from the research literature on domestic violence in general" (p. 4). Websdale offers the following observations and/or critiques:

- it is better to assert that various factors are associative or correlative, with the clear understanding that correlation is not proof of causation;

- lethal outcomes may be dependent upon the availability of other services (e.g., emergency medical) (Doerner, 1983; Mann, 1988; Websdale, 1999, cited in Websdale, 2001); i.e., services available to avert death in one location may not be present in another;

- most tools use "lethality indicators" that are, in fact, characteristic of many domestic violence relationships. Websdale argues it is impossible to measure the intensity of those cases that will escalate to death in a way that can be translated into a standardized assessment tool, as the meaning of variables (e.g., intensity of

entrapment) is dependent upon victims' subjective experiences;

- as domestic homicide may occur in the absence of a long history of abuse, entrapment, and service provider involvement, it is imperative not to provide women with a false sense of security when few of the typical antecedents are present. Websdale suggests there may be value in women understanding that any violent relationship may end in homicide;

- as use of the instruments presupposes a population of women who will complete questionnaires, assessment of risk is likely to exclude a large number of women of diverse populations who may be reluctant to disclose information to advocates, police, or other criminal justice personnel. Websdale notes however that Campbell's Danger Assessment Instrument has been used successfully with African-American and Hispanic women, although not Asian women. It is noted also that most of the instruments are only written in English;

- the very nature of the process, i.e., using tools that employ check boxes for gaining "clean data", may be impersonal, reducing women's experience to a final score at the very time when they need individualized care and respect. Websdale cautions that this "clinical logic" that screens and classifies women in an effort to use resources efficiently[36], "is consistent with a broader patriarchal cultural ethic that silences, devalues, and dismisses women's intuitive and subjective ways of knowing" (p. 6).

Coombe (1999) similarly illuminates some of the unmet challenges and dilemmas associated with the use of risk assessment tools, as identified in what has been learned from advocates and service providers about their experiences with battered women. A series of 11 issues are raised, related to differences of philosophy and practice, challenges to collaboration based on differing mandates, training and supervision, battered women's fear of retaliation and/or denial of violence, confidentiality, resource allocation, and the danger of assuming violence can be predicted. A discussion of the issues raised, though providing no definitive answers, contributes to the current knowledge base, and promotion of trust and collaboration necessary to further this work.

Despite these difficulties, and though empirical studies are few, Websdale (2001) and others (Goodman et al., 2000) note there is early evidence to suggest that risk assessments used in safety planning for victims of intimate partner violence may be useful in gaining additional insights and assisting in the adoption of new safety measures. It may be that their use encourages coordination among multiple service providers (Roehl & Guertin, 1998, cited in Websdale, (2001). Goodman et al. reported findings that suggest the Danger Assessment Scale (Campbell, cited in Goodman et al., 2000), when administered to battered women seeking help from the criminal justice system, can contribute significantly to the prediction of abuse recurrence within the next three months. The

[36] See also Campbell (n.d.) who reference fears that risk assessment will be used to limit service to victims.

authors provide cautions however, regarding the limitations of their methodology, and about using the scale as a method of gaining information rather than as a predictive instrument.

Websdale cautions against assessment tools forming the exclusive basis for safety planning for victims, that they should not substitute for listening carefully to women and learning about the complexities of their lives, and that they should never be utilized in close proximity to the violent partner. He suggests however that they can provide the useful function of exposing justice officials to issues they might not otherwise consider, and provide a "touchstone" for victims themselves, a lens through which they can see their situation.

Though risk assessments have been used for the past decade by advocates to increase victim safety, and by researchers and theorists to inform the development of interventions both for men (e.g., Hanson & Wallace-Capretta, 2000b) and for women (e.g., Ellis & DeKeseredy, 1997), their use in relation to charging and sentencing intimate partner violence offenders is a more recent development (Roehl & Guertin, 2000). Roehl and Guertin, in conducting an extensive review of the literature to identify court systems that use risk assessments, reported six states in the United States using instruments statewide and, on a larger scale, the Spousal Assault Risk Assessment (SARA, developed by staff at the British Columbia Institute on Family Violence) available for use nationwide in Canada. Though risk assessments hold the potential of increasing safety for victims, and providing information to more accurately allocate scare resources toward appropriate interventions and sanctions for offenders, unresolved legal and ethical issues surrounding their use are noted. The study produced a table of ten instruments currently used in sentencing, along with content and available psychometric/validation data.

It is evident there exists a disconnect between current assessments of danger as reflected in public policy legislation and recent literature on violence. In a cross jurisdictional review of dangerousness legislation and practice, Petrunik (1994) notes the broadest area of concern in relation to Canada's approach to high risk violent offenders is its focus on dangerousness as a product of pathology, a view that runs counter to the body of research that "has portrayed violence as a pervasive problem largely occurring in a domestic context or relationships between acquaintances" (p. 66). Legislation has therefore failed to address violence in the domestic context, where Canadians are most at risk for personal injury. At that time no studies existed that showed that those few sexual and violent individuals who have been adjudicated as dangerous offenders "were signaled out because their behaviour had been demonstrably more violent, dangerous, or repetitive than those of other aggressive criminals" (Webster & Dickens, quoted in Petrunik, 1994, p. 62). It is concluded that in drawing attention away from frequently recurring forms of violence, the legislation may be problematic, not because there are not admittedly some individuals from whom society must be protected, but because "the financial and social costs of selecting those few might be very high and the amount of protection actually afforded to society very low" (p. 66).

It is useful to note, though seldom reflected in the literature reviewed, that on the "flip side" of risk factors for repeated abuse are "protective factors", which include "the community reputation of the batterer, steady employment, stable living situations, personal honor, support systems of family and

friends, and the presence of stable relationships" (Roehl & Guertin, 2000, p. 175). It is evident that Linda McLeod's caution associated with risk assessments, in diverting attention toward predicting problems rather than building solutions, may be well placed.

3.5 Restorative Justice

The appropriateness of restorative justice processes being utilized in cases involving intimate partner violence is controversial, and is debated in the literature. Many of those who are "well acquainted with the power and control characteristics of domestic abuse" (Nicholl, 1998, p. 21) have lobbied against the use of restorative justice (CASAC Regional Representatives Committee, cited in Provincial Association Against Family Violence, 2000) or mediation (Transition House of Nova Scotia, 2000), suggesting they have the potential to place in jeopardy the gains of recent decades that have been made in having domestic/intimate partner violence recognized as a crime and taken seriously by the criminal justice system. Others suggest many restorative justice initiatives "may complement the criminal justice system and effectively function side by side" (Provincial Association Against Family Violence, 2000, p. 21). Still others maintain its application to cases involving intimate partner violence is a "dilemma that doesn't have answers yet" (Reddin, in Law Commission of Canada, 2000).

Whether and how restorative justice might be used in cases involving spousal/intimate partner violence is absent in some of the theoretical discussion papers on the issue (e.g., Law Commission of Canada, 1999). Others (for example, Department of Justice Canada, 2000[37]) have raised the question of appropriate offences for restorative processes. While the consultation paper cites programs such as Community Justice Initiatives in Langley, British Columbia as having "some success in working with sentenced offenders in cases of serious personal and sexual violence" (p. 11), it clearly identifies that if there is a role for restorative justice in serious cases, it must be clearly defined. The role of government and community as decision making partners must be addressed, as must other issues such as the role of victims and their protection from further harm, accountability to victims, offenders, communities, and the public, and training and standards of practice.

Clairmont (2000), though not addressing the advisability of its application to cases involving spousal/intimate partner violence, and stating "it is still not clear whether [restorative justice] will be appropriately implemented and what its impact will be for offenders, victims and others" (p. 146), suggests "it appears that [its] value may hinge upon its programs dealing with serious offences and offenders and not being hived off either administratively or at 'front end' (i.e., police charging) entry points" (p.146). As such, it is expected that intensely emotional, intractable issues lie ahead.

Coward (2000), who conducted interviews with various practitioners and professionals in the

[37] This consultation paper was prepared by the Federal-Provincial-Territorial Working Group on Restorative Justice. It is intended to provide a common set of consultation questions that each jurisdiction may choose to use to gather input from communities and agencies in the development of restorative justice programs.

women's movement throughout Canada observed that "women are not necessarily opposed to restorative justice initiatives *per se*. Rather, they are opposed to these initiatives as they are presently developed and applied" (p. 10). Most predominant concerns Coward noted in her research include:

- a concern over a lack of consultation with women's and victims' groups;
- a fear that restorative justice initiatives would not work to sufficiently denounce domestic and sexual violence and would, ultimately, undo the advances made by women's groups to have these crimes taken seriously by the criminal justice system;
- a concern that women victims be given an informed choice regarding whether or not they participate;
- a concern over issues of power dynamics and imbalance;
- a concern that programs are being transferred to the community without the requisite resources also being made available; and
- a concern with a lack of training and evaluation standards (pp. 11-12).

Cultural concerns were also noted in the literature. Crynkovich (cited in Clairmont & Linden, 1998, p. 44; Clairmont, 1999, p. 40) recommends caution in the use of circle sentencing for cases of spousal assault due to "the discriminatory nature of some Inuit traditions (e.g. elders might excuse wife abuse on the grounds that the woman has not been obedient to her husband, [a view that] Inuit women would not share)". Similarly, Nahanee (cited in Clairmont & Linden, 1998, p. 28; Clairmont, 1999, p. 73) expresses scepticism about "restorative justice practices such as the use of elders' circles unless there is a genuine return to traditional ways and a sharing of power between men and women"[38].

Coward quotes a statement of the British Columbia Association of Specialized Victim Assistance and Counselling Programs, that suggests the provision to divert cases of violence against women in relationships to alternative measures and restorative justice programs be eliminated "until there is an opportunity to conduct all of the necessary research, analysis and evaluation of these initiatives and consult with all of the affected parties" (pp. 10-11). Until the particular cautions of the women's movement are resolved some programs have made a decision to exclude cases involving

[38] See also LaPrairie (1992, cited in Clairmont & Linden, 1998, p. 46), who contends that "advocates may be seriously underestimating the complexities of introducing viable justice alternatives". LaPrairie advises that community resources required for justice interventions are scant in the Yukon; previous justice projects, "introduced piece-meal, with little pre-implementation work, little community participation, and minimal monitoring and evaluation", have resulted in little sense of incremental development. LaRocque (n.d.) also argues that a "growing complex of reinvented traditions ... have become extremely popular even while lacking historical or anthropological contextualization" (p. 76). LaRocque maintains this is especially true in relation to notions of justice and the role of women in Aboriginal societies. The resulting programs "completely fail to discriminate between issues" (p. 81).

domestic/intimate partner violence (e.g., Aboriginal Legal Services of Toronto, cited in Clairmont & Linden, 1998; Bonta, Wallace-Capretta, & Rooney, 1998), indicating the advisability of first developing a working model (Scott, 2000)[39].

Limited material exists on the effectiveness and viability of restorative justice initiatives in relation to spousal/intimate partner violence. Bonta et al. (1998), in a meta-analytic review of the literature exploring the impact of restorative justice programs on recidivism, identified 14 evaluations. The effects were reported as small, but positive. None of the programs reportedly involved spousal/intimate partner violence; most involved juvenile offenders. Bonta et al. note the studies show "the complexity of implementing and evaluating an approach that is relatively new in North America" (p. 6).

An extensive review of the literature evaluating justice projects in Aboriginal communities conducted by Clairmont and Linden (1998) referenced two initiatives (Burford & Pennell, 1996; Ellis & Beaver, 1993) that address cases involving spousal/intimate partner violence. Clairmont and Linden's annotated bibliography cites one[40] as reporting effectiveness; a description of the second was not provided. It is suggested elsewhere (McCold, 1998, pp. 20-23) that a third initiative cited by Clairmont and Linden (Hollow Water), though having been initiated to respond to incest and sexual assault, includes cases involving spousal/intimate partner violence. A description of the program (Ministry of the Solicitor General of Canada, 1997), described by Clairmont and Linden as an "exceptional document" (p. 8), claims that when assessing effectiveness related to offenders' potential to sexually offend again, "Hollow Water can stand with any other treatment program available anywhere" (p. 11). Research evidence suggests otherwise. LaPrairie (cited in Moyer, 2000) summarized an evaluation of the Hollow Water Community Holistic Circle healing program that found that only 28% of victims (compared to 72% of offenders) reported sentencing circles as a positive experience. LaRocque (n.d.) reports having received numerous calls from concerned people, particularly Native women, "express[ing] shock, disgust, and outrage" (p. 93) as a result of one sentence reported in the *Winnipeg Free Press* in the winter of 1993. LaRocque critically examines the "assumptions of 'tradition' upon which Aboriginally controlled justice systems seem to be based" (p. 75), and particularly cautions against a disregard for Native women's perspectives.

Pennell and Burford (1997) have written extensively on the Family Group Decision Making Project, implemented as a pilot in 1993 at three sites, Nain (Inuit), St. John's (urban), and Port au Port Peninsula (rural), and which they consider to be both "an innovation in child and family welfare", and "just good social work practice"[41]. The project was designed for situations involving family violence, as a means of "building partnerships among family, community, and government to keep children and adults safe and promote their well-being" (p. 1). In recognizing that child maltreatment and woman

[39] An evaluation of the Collaborative Justice Project is currently being undertaken by the Department of the Solicitor General Canada. See Department of the Solicitor General Canada, (1999).

[40] See Pennell and Burford (1997) below.

[41] See bibliographic references in Pennell & Burford (1997).

abuse often occur together, the project covers this joint focus, although most referrals pertained to child abuse or neglect and youth unmanageability and did not specify the extent of woman abuse. The plan developed at the family group conference, involving relatives, friends, and other close supports, must be approved by the referring authority (e.g., child welfare or correctional services).

McCold (1999) identifies the guiding principles of the Family Group Decision Making Model (FGDM), as modified by Pennell and Burford, which he describes as "perhaps the finest manifestation of the New Zealand model[42] applied to child welfare cases" (p. 9). The rationale for FGDM is based in the understanding that:

> the best long-range solutions are those which give the affected parties the opportunity to develop a plan tailored to their family and cultural situation....it is understood that families and community members must be given protection so they can participate in the decision-making without fear of reprisal from the offender and that they must have the tools and supports available to them to work through the solutions they come up with (p. 9).

An outcome study (Pennell & Burford, 1997) examining the effects of the family group decision making project one-to-two years after the conferences, employed a quasi-experimental design: non-random assignment of families to the project group and comparison groups, comparison of pre-test and post-test measures, quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis. Three outcome areas were assessed: progress, abuse/neglect, and well-being. The study reported two-thirds (n = 76) of the 115 participants said their family was "better off" because of the conference (favourable responses cut across the three culturally diverse sites, the experiences of abuse, and the family roles). Project participants reported the conference assisted the families in four main areas: enhancing family unity, improving care for children and young people, reducing problem drinking, and decreasing family violence against children and adults. Responses indicating the family was "worse off" (n = 7, from 5 families) related to plans which separated parents from their children, or serious failures to carry through on the plans.

Based on 31 child protection events used as indicators of child abuse/neglect and adult abuse in Children's Protection Services files, the study showed that for the project families, the number of events were halved by the second year after the conference (reflecting a decrease for the majority of families). In contrast, the comparison group increased its number of total events (reflecting an increase for the majority of families).

In relation to woman abuse, the plans developed by families were intended to be specific to the monitoring of all family members' safety needs. The study reported a general lessening of indicators of woman abuse for the project group, in contrast to the comparison group. Two events were specifically noted as decreasing: a family member having to leave home in the midst of a crisis to get away from an abuser, and a family member calling the authorities to respond to a perceived threat or actual violence. The study further reports "sizable gains" in levels of social support. The authors

[42] See McCold, 1999, p. 8.

elsewhere conclude (cited in Clairmont & Linden, 1998) that "family group conferencing is an effective way to deal with violence and sexual abuse without discounting the seriousness of these problems" (p. 41).

Finally, the study reports the impact of the project on the practice and policy of mandated authorities and other service providers, and identifies 20 important steps that were helpful in keeping family members safe and promoting their well-being. One of those steps identifies key entry points, recommending that families be referred after the abuse/neglect has been substantiated but as early as possible in the intervention, or at other key points such as when a child is about to be taken into care or an offender is about to be released.

The appropriate entry point in relation to restorative justice initiatives in cases involving spousal/intimate partner violence has been considered elsewhere in the literature. While most restorative justice programs in North America are pre-trial or court-based programs (Department of the Solicitor General, 1999), consideration of restorative justice principles in cases involving spousal/intimate partner violence is considered by some to be appropriate only at the post-conviction stage (Nova Scotia Department of Justice, 1998). The planned evaluation of the Restorative Community Reintegration Project in Winnipeg (Department of the Solicitor General, 1999), the first program to introduce restorative justice practices into the release/reintegration process, may be expected to provide additional information on the applicability of restorative justice processes to this population group.

While the literature is scant, some suggest that at a theoretical level restorative justice has the potential to achieve what the criminal justice system cannot. Clairmont and Linden (1998) suggest the revival of restorative justice in recent years, following extensive implementation in the 1960s and 1970s that "proved to be relatively ineffective and inefficient" is "testimony both to the flaws of the conventional justice system, and to the potential of restorative justice" (p. 7; see also Clairmont, 2000).

Recent material provides a historical, critical analysis of the appropriateness of restorative justice being used as a strategy to address spousal/partner violence (Nicholl, 1998; Martin, 1999; Presser & Gaarder, 2000). The limitations of a legal framework are acknowledged by each theorist, as is the potential of restorative justice to address "the structural and diffuse foundations of the battering problem" (Presser & Gaarder, 2000, p. 188). It is cautioned however, that, as stated above, the solution to the problem of spousal/partner violence cannot lie with any one sector. No claims are made that restorative justice holds *the* ultimate answer (Presser & Gaarder, 2000).

Martin (1999), in exploring the irony of the battered women's movement embracing the social control measures of the criminal justice system, maintains that laws merely reflect culture and cannot fundamentally alter power relations. Though the battered women's movement has been instrumental in obtaining the legal protections for women and children to which all citizens ought to be entitled, Martin suggests the demand for justice has created both "innovative and supportive programs for domestic violence victims" and "other, more insidious marriages ... in which women's rights to self-

determination and privacy are violated" (p. 420). The unintended consequences of pro-arrest policies which Martin and others recount have been the result of the changing rhetoric, from justice and equality, to deterrence, and finally, to social control that presently exists in the "war on crime" environment. Martin suggests that

> [a]s feminists have demanded the liberal reforms of criminal justice system intervention, even while acknowledging failures of justice, they have continued to fuel even greater use of social control resources and definitions of battering which are individual and pathological in nature, rather than political and cultural (p. 426).

Martin argues that a shift is necessary, that visionary strategies are required, that the present "social service and criminal justice paradigms are transitional stages in the search for justice for battered women" (p. 416). Restorative justice, though having "the potential for empowering the victim, holding offenders accountable, and promoting community goodwill" (p. 429), ultimately can do little to fundamentally alter the status quo. Martin imagines structures yet unknown, future goals to be envisioned "once restorative justice paradigms are embraced, [that] move beyond this institution, to encompass other institutions, structures, and cultural processes which can fundamentally change the conditions of women's lives" (p.431). Embracing restorative justice paradigms, she argues, is a first step to producing a transformed system "which truly challenges inequality, the basis for violence" (p. 433).

Nicholl (1998) likewise suggests it is "unreasonable to expect a limited *legal* response to solve an ever pervasive *social* problem" (p. 1), and highlights the "awkward partnership between a challenged system and its most vociferous challengers" (p. 3). She too traces the history of the activity of the women's movement in "giving a wake-up call to policy makers and practitioners in the criminal justice system" (p. 6). She similarly addresses the irony; in the wake of its success the women's movement now finds itself working on one part of the problem - those cases that demand the full weight of the law and the power of the state to punish. As part of her argument in favour of adopting restorative justice principles, Nicholl maintains "it is impossible, and probably counterproductive, to use the criminal justice approach to deal with the broad nature of abusive relationships between men and women" (p. 6). The criminal justice 'solution' "appears to have reached a stalemate between what we have learned is necessary and what can realistically be achieved through an adversarial approach" (p. 6). She predicts however, that it will be some time before the shortcomings of the criminal justice paradigm are widely recognized, our skepticism about the existence of 'community' is overcome, and the capacity of the community to tackle something as complex as domestic violence is acknowledged. The possibility of restorative justice processes to mobilize the community however, is promoted as a vital component in the shift from a narrow legal intervention to a broader social response.

Presser and Gaarder (2000) concur. The potential of restorative justice lies precisely in its emphasis on the central role of communities in solving crime problems, a role that differs significantly from the individualized response of the legal model that both constrains women's choice and leaves the extralegal causes of their oppression unchanged. Presser and Gaarder believe solutions to crime must

be publically located. Restorative justice "generalizes ownership of the battering problem beyond victims and offenders and beyond government to communities" (p. 188). Though solutions are yet to be realized, such an emphasis holds the potential of affecting larger societal structures through individual community response.

3.6 Interventions for Children Exposed to Domestic Violence

The effects of domestic violence on children has received an increased amount of attention in the research literature during the past two decades (Kolbo, Blakely, & Engleman, 1996). Although the growing conclusion that "a linear social learning model is not adequate for explaining the relationship between children's witnessing domestic violence and their subsequent development" (p. 290), it is perceived that the impact on children's emotional and behavioural development is unequivocal (Goodman & Rosenberg, 1987; Grusznski, Brink, & Edelson, 1988; Jaffe, Wolfe, & Wilson, 1990; Kolbo, et al., 1996; Health Canada, 1999; Jaffe, 2000; Mullender, 2000).

The literature is clear that this is an under-researched area (Peled & Edleson, 1992; Educon Marketing and Research Systems, 1998; The Alliance of Five Research Centres on Violence, 1999). Selected studies are noted. Tentative approaches to individual trauma-specific psychotherapy are reported in the literature (Silvern, Karyl, & Landis, 1995), as well as results of early efforts to provide small group interventions (Peled & Edleson, 1992; Peled & Edleson, 1995), and programs for safe visitation with, or exchange of children post-separation. Using a qualitative evaluation, Peled and Edleson (1992) suggest a 10-session support and education group can, in large part, meet the major goals of (a) allowing children to break the secret of violence, (b) enhancing children's ability to protect themselves, (c) strengthening their self esteem, and (d) providing a safe and fun environment in which children can have positive experiences (Peled & Edleson, 1995; see also Grusznski, Brink, & Edelson, 1988). McMahon, Neville-Sorvilles, and Schubert (1999) claim the Duluth Family Visitation Center, opened in 1989 as the first visitation center in the United States, has been meeting its goal of providing a safe place for the exchange of or visitation with children whose parents are separated as a result of violence.

In addition to post-violence interventions, initiatives to "empower" battered women as mothers (Bilinkoff, 1995), provide parenting groups for men who use violence (Mathews, 1995), provide parent education programs for separating and divorcing parents (Bacon & McKenzie, 2001), and provide school-based or other preventative interventions are also noted in the literature.

The Department of Justice Canada commissioned an extensive meta-analysis in 1998 (Educon Marketing and Research Systems, 1998) of the various intervention models then in existence. The study employed a comprehensive review of empirical literature and a bilingual national survey distributed to 200 urban and rural agencies, organizations, and groups providing services to children, with a response rate of 60% (n = 120) representing all regions of the country. A summary report identified key Justice-related research and policy considerations, including:

Research Considerations

- the rarity of published or even unpublished systematic evaluations of treatment strategies or intervention models that have been tried with children;

- the capacity of women's shelters to comment on the issues of children who are exposed to violence and about the implications of legislative changes "if they were to include child witnesses as 'at risk' and 'in need of protection'". Justice research is promoted in this realm;

- the requirement for follow-up data from abused women and their children about the impact of family violence on children's cognition and behaviours, to inform the direction of research and the development of interventions;

- the advisability of abused women and child survivors having the opportunity to provide input into future research projects on the effects of children's exposure to spousal/intimate partner violence;

Policy Considerations

- the promotion of a coordinated approach to the plight of children who are exposed to violence in the home, involving legal, mental health, medical, and social service resources;

- a recognition that mandatory reporting to child protection agencies in cases of spousal/intimate partner violence where children are present might deter women from seeking assistance; it is suggested that interventions for children might best be provided by private, non-profit services, with public assistance;

- the requirement for basic incidence and prevalence information about children who are exposed to violence in the home, as well as information about the interrelationship between exposure to violence and other forms of child abuse and neglect.

Educon Marketing and Research Systems, 1998, pp. 5-6

Health Canada (1999), notes the magnitude of work that needs to be done in this area in citing one study reporting "two out of three pediatric emergency fellows believed that responding to battered mothers did not belong to the practice of pediatrics" (Wright, Wright, and Isaac, 1997, cited in Health Canada, 1999, p. 16). According to this handbook, as the trauma of children who are exposed to violence in the home is not understood or is minimized, they are presently the ignored victims. Current recognition of this emerging focus is reflected in an upcoming international conference on children exposed to domestic violence (*Our Children Our Future*, 2001), scheduled for June 6-8, 2001 in London, Ontario. This conference will focus present knowledge in the areas of research, intervention models, and policy development[43].

[43] Selected workshops include partnership programs between police and mental health professionals, custody and access disputes involving domestic violence, clinical and legal challenges, dilemmas in educational programming for judges, child witnesses of domestic violence as court witnesses, effects of witnessing violence for police, and the aftermath of intimate partner femicide for children.

4.0 Summary and Conclusions

This paper has examined research on the effectiveness and viability of traditional services for both female victims and male perpetrators of spousal/partner violence, and has analyzed the limited material available on conjoint interventions, coordinated responses, restorative justice approaches, and interventions for children exposed to domestic violence.

The importance of continuing to examine extralegal interventions is emphasized, in the inability of the individualized response of the criminal justice system to address the structural roots of the problem and in the critique that it has failed to present women with satisfactory choices, ensure women's safety and transform offenders. Further, some consider it is impossible, and probably counterproductive, to deal with the broad range of severity of violence in intimate relationships between men and women within a formal justice response. It is increasingly recognized that a continuum of violence exists.

The assumption of the women's movement and the criminal justice system that the goal of women who have experienced violence in their relationship is to live independently from their partner is sometimes at variance with women's perception of their self-defined goal. Many women do return to the partner who has been violent. This may be attributed in part to the processes involved in making the decision to leave; it may also be attributed to the desire of many women and men to make satisfying changes to make their relationship work. A "woman-defined advocacy" (as distinguished from "service-defined") has been identified as beneficial, based on the understanding that separation is no longer seen as the only real answer to domestic violence.

While the success of women's shelters as an intervention measured against the goal of independent living may be assessed as limited, the provision of short term safe housing for women in crisis, particularly in cases of severe violence, is considered imperative as part of a continuum of services available to victims of spousal/intimate partner violence. It is evident from the literature however, that there presently exists little empirical information about the effectiveness of shelter programming.

Though a large majority of men's intervention programs in Canada have never been systematically evaluated, and few of the evaluations that do exist have used methodologies appropriate for assessing effectiveness, there is evidence of cautious optimism in relation to reduction of abuse, increased willingness of men to take responsibility for the abuse, and increased feelings of victim safety. Of crucial importance is an emphasis on monitoring program compliance and enforcing sanctions. Recommendations are made for increased research rigour. In addition, debate exists about the content and philosophical approach of intervention modalities. The most recent studies have concluded that program integrity, rather than content or philosophy, was considered to have an impact on recidivism rates, although the effect was marginally significant. It is simply too soon to know with certainty whether men's intervention programs are effective and whether one model is more effective than another. Essential elements of effective intervention remain unknown.

The literature reveals a call for interventions that recognize, and are appropriate for, a continuum of

violence severity. Such an approach recognizes there are a variety of familial contexts in which violence occurs. A call is made for research on female victimization in other than shelter-seeking samples, with the suggestion that studying only the most extreme subgroup of abused women may not be truly representative, or even the most common group of women requiring support services. Similarly, the same intervention program may not be appropriate for all men. A "one-size fits all" approach fails to recognize the diversity of men who enter programs. Assessments are considered necessary of the likelihood that individuals will complete and/or benefit from a particular intervention. As well, continued research is necessary on efforts to match intervention to a variety of offender characteristics, including motivational and psychological differences.

Interventions involving couples are controversial and are clearly identified as an adjunct rather than a substitute for the involvement of the criminal justice system. Though employing the relational bond may be possible only in conjoint interventions, victim safety and appropriate attribution of responsibility remain key, as well as assessments to identify those couples for whom the intervention would not be appropriate. While very few studies were located in the literature, early indications are that a couples group format may be as effective as batterer-only groups. Increasingly, the question is not whether, but under what circumstances interventions involving couples are appropriate.

The literature reflects increasing calls for the coordination of criminal justice, social service, mental health, and community interventions. Most of the limited research studies available have focussed on individual components of a coordinated intervention rather than the entire community response. The desirability is indicated for system-wide evaluations to understand the impact of different components on other parts of the system, and the effectiveness of the overall response.

In addition to improving existing services and exploring new initiatives and coordinated efforts to increase the safety of women assaulted by their intimate partners, practitioners, researchers, and public policy makers have made efforts to improve their understanding of the ability to assess risk related to both re-offending and lethality/dangerousness. Domestic violence risk prediction is in its infancy. Researchers caution that no instrument can be a foolproof predictive tool due to the lack of solid evidence of a causal relationship between danger signs and subsequent violence. Early evidence suggests however, that risk assessments may be useful in gaining additional information in assisting victims to develop safety planning, and in encouraging coordination among multiple service providers.

The literature reveals calls for a continued cautious examination of conditions under which restorative justice forums may be considered to be appropriate mechanisms for dealing with spousal/intimate partner violence. While the literature is sparse, the potential of restorative justice is acknowledged, in its emphasis on the central role of communities in solving crime problems, a role that differs from the individualized response of the legal model that both constrains women's choices and leaves the extralegal causes of their oppression unchanged. At a theoretical level, restorative justice is perceived by some to be a first step in the movement toward a transformed justice system that truly challenges inequality and fundamentally changes the conditions of women's lives. Others voice present operational concerns about, for example, informed choice for victims, power dynamics and imbalance,

and the potential to compromise the significant gains made in having the issue of spousal/intimate partner violence taken seriously by the criminal justice system.

Finally, this study has made evident the need to develop and evaluate intervention strategies to support children who are exposed to spousal/intimate partner violence. The magnitude of work to be done in this under-researched area is acknowledged.

A final note must be added about the critical importance of widespread training, education and prevention activities, and the need for increasingly rigorous research on theoretically driven interventions. The latter is advocated by some academics (Fagan, 1996) to prevent the continuing frustration of being forced to conclude that "[w]e just don't know, the evaluation data aren't very good" (p. 37). The further development of policies for legal interventions and innovative practices both to protect victims of intimate partner violence and to reduce violent activity is clearly dependent upon such systematic evidence.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Discourse	Summary Definition	Theories Included	Agency	Implications for Intervention
Pathology	Male violence against women is abnormal and is symptomatic of an underlying pathology	Psychopathological, example, Organic Deficiency theories (violence as a manifestation of mental illness) Victim precipitation theories, example Freudian masochistic models (victims possess characteristics that trigger their victimization) Family Systems approach (the cause of wife abuse lies in the dysfunctional relationship itself) Hereditary disease (intergenerational transmission of abuse; alcoholism as a reason for violence)	Abusing men are victims of an etiology that is beyond their control. Accompanying statements: "He was drunk", "He's a maniac", He's had a hard life", The whole family is dysfunctional", "It takes two to tango", "He only did it because he's insecure".	Long term therapy, with a prognosis of violence disappearing upon cure of the underlying malady Family or marital therapy, with a goal to remove dysfunctional relationship patterns

Discourse	Summary Definition	Theories Included	Agency	Implications for Intervention
Expressive Tension	Violence is a manifestation of high degrees of inner tension and/or personal frustration Reflects Romantic world view of pre-Enlightenment 16th and 17th centuries.	Instinct theories of human aggression (innate aggressive tension is an instinctual drive, requiring regular discharge) Frustration-aggression hypothesis (aggression is a natural, biologically driven response to environmentally induced frustration; potential greater within the family due to close interaction) Social Structure theory (violence is more common and more severe among those with fewer life chances, i.e., lower socioeconomic status)	Abusing men are subject to powerful forces from within over which they have little control. Accompanying statements: "He flew into a rage", "He's been under a lot of pressure lately".	Anger management, with a goal to teach people how to manage aggressive energies in a nonviolent way; Socialist interventions, with a goal to reduce violence-provoking stress, i.e., reducing poverty, inequality, and unemployment; providing for adequate housing, food, medical care, and educational opportunities

Discourse	Summary Definition	Theories Included	Agency	Implications for Intervention
Instrumental Power	Violence is used as a strategy to resolve conflicts, to remove stressors, to get one's way, to assert dominance over others, and/or to enhance one's self-esteem and self-concept. Draws upon the wider liberal humanist discourse of the 17th and 18th centuries.	Exchange theory (individuals engage in a cost-benefit analysis of their interactions; in pursuit of reward and avoidance of punishment, people abuse others because they can) Conflict theory (conflict is an inevitable part of human interaction; imbalances occur among the interrelated parts of all social systems, the home being one such system) Resource theory (violence is used as a resource when other resources, such as status or income, are insufficient for control) Intrapsychic (men, in particular, due to the prevalence of powerful men surrounding them, subject to feelings of inadequacy, develop a "will to power" to resolve this conflict) Self-attitude theory (violence may be the result of an individual's struggle to cope with negative self-attitudes) Feminist Sociopolitical (wife beating is a controlling behaviour that perpetuates male dominance; men's violence cannot be separated from social context)	Abusing men are rational entities who are fully conscious and in control of their goal-directed behaviour. Accompanying statements: "I was only trying to make a point", I couldn't back down", "She had been warned", "A man's home is his castle", "Someone had to do something", Might is right".	Active police intervention, found to reduce the likelihood of future assault by half; Offering abusing men new, nonviolent alternative means for attaining their goals in a conflict situation (e.g., negotiation, conflict resolution, and assertion skills); Challenging men's private meanings through consciousness raising Employs pathological, instrumental, and social-systemic discourses, implying a multitude of strategic points of intervention Calls for radical revision of patriarchal institutions and normative foundations that support the patriarchal family

Discourse	Summary Definition	Theories Included	Agency	Implications for Intervention
Social System	Wife abuse is a logical extension of various cultural norms and institutional practices in Western society that socialize men to be violent and predispose women to become victims of men's abuse. Male violence not so much abnormal as it is extreme but understandable. Note - this perspective is in direct conflict with the pathological position, which holds violent behaviour to be abnormal.	Subculture of Violence thesis (specific groups [lower SES in particular] develop norms and values that condone the use of violence to a greater extent than is deemed appropriate by the dominant culture) Culture of Violence model (all social backgrounds condone physical violence; implicitly some approval for male violence against women in the home) Sex-role socialization theory (compliments Culture of Violence model - distinct cultural norms for each gender operate in society). Male emotional funnel system (social-cognitive theory - men are more likely to interpret arousal as anger rather than any other primary emotion, and are more likely to explode with rage than attend to their emotional needs). Homophobic nature of masculine ideology (intimacy with other men is feared, resulting in superficial relationships with men, and over emotional dependency on female partners). Women taught to "stand by their man", and blame themselves for relationship problems and for their own victimization.	The social system is a powerful determinant of behaviour; individuals lack any real sense of agency beyond what is determined by social structures. Strong tension between this structuralist position and the individualism of the liberal humanist-instrumental discourse. Accompanying statements: "Boys will be boys", "He just went a little too far this time", It's just a domestic", "I only pushed her", "It's a woman's lot", "He just doesn't know how to express himself".	Modify the normative constraints within the whole social system so that men and women are socialized more appropriately - through education, consciousness raising, pressure on the media, new or revised laws, mandatory police intervention, anti-pornography groups

Discourse	Summary Definition	Theories Included	Agency	Implications for Intervention
Learned Behaviour	Violent behaviour, if it has been observed, and particularly if it has been rewarded in the past, becomes a more likely response.	Cycle of violence (tension builds, violence takes place, respiteful, loving, relaxing period, tension builds) Social Learning theory (aggression can be motived by either an aversion instigator [to remove aversive stimulator, e.g. tension] or an inducement instigator [to gain an anticipated payoff, e.g. gaining control]) Compatible with other discursive positions, but not reducible to them.	Positions agents as passive receptors of learning experiences, who learn attitudes and specific behaviours. Individuals have the ability to change; change is possible. Accompanying statements: "Like father like son", "He didn't know any better", "We can't let him get away with this", "Show me what to do".	Imparting new skills and reduction of skill deficits; conflict resolution, assertiveness skills, anger-management strategies: relaxation and stress reduction, accurate identification of emotions and cognitive restructuring, interpersonal skills development; learning discourses in therapy; training for police officers to actively intervene and to change community attitudes Consistent with a liberal humanist position of action Learning theory appears to transcend and be incorporated into the intervention practices of all other discourses

Discourse	Summary Definition	Theories Included	Agency	Implications for Intervention
Integrated multidiscursive perspectives	Rather than dogmatically working from within a single theoretical position, many practitioners and theorists recommend taking a "both/and" position.	Multilevel systems analysis (systematically integrates and interweaves different constructs and discourses together)	Looks at ways in which abusing men are constrained from making more peaceable choices in their behaviour	Eclectic - not a simple position to take, making the construction of an integrated intervention program difficult, fragmentary, and potentially contradictory

(Crump, 2000, adapted from O'Neill, 1998)

Risk Factors Incorporated into Dangerousness Assessments

Factors Related to Past Violence	Psychological and Other Attributes of the Offender	Dynamics of the Victim-Offender Relationship
Use of weapon(s)	Access to or ownership of weapons	Threats to kill
Serious injuries in past incidents	Extent to which weapons are part of batterer's "persona"	Forced sex
Number of past incidents	Suicide and homicide threats or fantasies	Changes in physical violence
Choking	Drug or alcohol abuse	Obsessiveness
Beatings while pregnant	Depression	Jealousy
Violence outside the home	Abuse in childhood	Dominance "ownership"
Violence toward children	Low self-esteem	Social isolation
Increased batterer risk taking	Anger	Violence in presence of children
Violations of court orders	Psychopathology	Inability to resolve conflict
Separation violence	Inability to accept blame	Imbalance in relationship
Hostage taking	Inability to accept rejection	Degree to which identity depends on relationship
		Financial and social dependence on victim
		Centrality of partner
		Estrangement

Roehl & Guertin (2000)